Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

Vol. 32, Issue 6
JUNE 2024

At Last

Blackhall gives Kinross Farm long-sought Maryland Hunt Cup

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Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

— Set List —

Blackhall, Kinross prevail in Maryland Hunt Cup

After years of trying to win the country's oldest steeplechase, Virginia owner Zohar Ben-Dov gets his Hunt Cup with a narrow win by Blackhall (Ire) in the 4-mile timber classic. By Joe Clancy. Page 20

Maryland-breds shine at Grand National

The second stop on Maryland's National Steeplechase Association timber tour turned into a day for locals as state-bred horses won three of the four races, topped by Awesome Adrian in the featured Grand National timber stakes. By Joe Clancy. Page 26

Our Friend lands My Lady's Manor for Armata

Our Friend (Ire) gets pointed to the My Lady's Manor meet instead of the Grand National by trainer Joe Davies, and comes through in the $50,000 feature. By Joe Clancy. Page 32

The other half of aftercare

Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred teams up with the Retired Racehorse Project for the first installment of a regular feature about aftercare in the Thoroughbred industry. By Kristen Kovatch Bentley. Page 42

Trackside Charles Town: Overnight success

The latest stakes horse from all-star broodmare Holy Pow Wow, 3-year-old filly Overnight Pow Wow, captures the Its Binn too Long Stakes for Beau Ridge Farm and trainer Cyndy McKee. By John Piassek. Page 50

On our cover: Blackhall (Ire) and Charlie Marshall charge down the stretch to win the Maryland Hunt Cup. *Photo by Douglas Lees.*

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**all earnings verifiable by The Jockey Club*

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Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

Volume 32, Issue 6

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Post Time

HIGH SEASON. Monmouth Park racetrack came back to life at the Jersey Shore with the opening of the stable area April 27 and the first day of racing May 11. *Bill Denver/Equi-Photo*

Say It Again

"He's literally a puppy around the barn, but man you get him out there and . . . well, I was just surviving when I first started hunting him. He stands at a check, will eat grass, just stand there. As soon as the first horse moves off, he's gone and I'm hanging on for dear life."
Trainer Todd McKenna, about foxhunting timber horse Hard Strike (who won three races this spring)

"He would like him. He might say his hind end is a little slight or a little light, but he's got a great shoulder and a great mind. That helped him. He has raw talent, but that's not all he has. He's smart."
Trainer Blythe Miller, on what her father Bruce, who died in April, would have thought of My Lady's Manor winner Wagner (Ire)

"They were here for 50 years. Wendy and I have been here for 37 and we're going to try to break their record."
Steeplechase owner Ben Griswold IV, who lives in the former home of Maryland timber stalwart Redmond Stewart Jr. and his wife Ann on the Grand National course

"I could hear them. Didn't dare look, just kept pushing."
Jockey Charlie Marshall, on winning a wild stretch battle in the Maryland Hunt Cup

A winner for 'Wally'

For some reason, trainer Tom Voss referred to Irish jump jockey Willie Dowling as Wally. If you knew Voss, there was really no reason to ask why. It just was. Anyway, Dowling rode mainly for his boss Jack Fisher (including major wins aboard champion Good Night Shirt) but picked up a spare for Voss at Colonial Downs in 2011.

Dowling called Voss after winning a maiden hurdle with Upper Gulch.

"Mr. Voss?"

"Yeah, Wally."

"I have a hundred-percent record with you, can I ride for you again?"

"Wally, let's just keep it that way."

And then Voss hung up.

Dowling, now a trainer, relayed the story after winning the Tom Voss Memorial at My Lady's Manor with Druid's Altar (Ire) April 13.

Voss, who died in 2014, would have loved it. He'd have called Dowling Wally, but he'd have loved it.

Names of the Month

Summerstateofmind. The 3-year-old Maryland-bred, a winner at Pimlico in May, is by Imagining out of Summer Kiss.

Home School. The 4-year-old gelding, a winner at Delaware Park and Laurel Park last year, is out of Study Hard.

I'm On Fire. This one is for the Springsteen fans. Bred and co-owned by ABL Stable, the New Jersey-bred is out of Mare On Fire. The 4-year-old Jump Start gelding won at Monmouth Park in May.

Go Figure

0 Bars of mobile service on mobile phones at the Grand National timber meet in Butler, Md.

68,550 Dollars earned by owner Irv Naylor's stable during the spring National Steeplechase Association season, which ended May 18. The figure moved Naylor to the top spot by career earnings with $9,072,402 (1964-2024), just ahead of Augustin Stable's $9,049,281. Naylor won two races at Radnor, the season's final stop.

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STAKES CLOSING THURSDAY, JUNE 27

7/13/24 The Million Preview - $125,000
3 Year Olds and Upward, One Mile And One-Eighth (Turf)

7/13/24 The Beverly D. Preview - $125,000
Fillies and Mares 3 Year Olds and Upward,
One Mile And One-Sixteenth (Turf)

7/13/24 The Boston - $125,000
3 Year Olds, One Mile (Turf)

STAKES CLOSING WEDNESDAY, JULY 3

7/20/24 The Edward P. Evans VA Bred/Sired - $125,000
3 Year Olds and Upward, One Mile (Turf)

7/20/24 The Punch Line VA Bred/Sired - $125,000
3 Year Olds and Upward, Five And One Half-Furlongs (Turf)

7/20/24 The Tyson Gilpin/Glenn Petty VA Bred/Sired - $125,000
Fillies and Mares 3 Year Olds and Upward,
Five And One-Half Furlongs (Turf)

7/20/24 The Brookmeade VA Bred/Sired - $125,000
Fillies and Mares 3 Year Olds and Upward,
One Mile And One-Sixteenth (Turf)

STAKES CLOSING WEDNESDAY, JULY 17

8/3/24 The Hickory Tree VA Restricted - $150,000
(Includes $50,000 for VA Bred & or Sired)
2 Year Olds, Five And One-Half Furlongs

8/3/24 The Keswick VA Restricted - $150,000
(Includes $50,000 for VA Bred & or Sired)
Fillies 2 Year Olds, Five And One-Half Furlongs

STAKES CLOSING WEDNESDAY, JULY 24

8/10/24 The Arlington Million - Grade I - $1,000,000
3 Year Olds and Upward, One Mile And One-Quarter (Turf)

8/10/24 The Beverly D. - Grade II - $500,000
Fillies and Mares 3 Year Olds and Upward,
One Mile And Three-Sixteenths (Turf)

8/10/24 The Secretariat - Grade II - $500,000
3 Year Olds, One Mile (Turf)

8/10/24 The Van Clief - $150,000
3 Year Olds and Upward, Five And One Half Furlongs (Turf)

8/10/24 The Andy Guest - $150,000
Fillies and Mares 3 Year Olds and Upward,
Five And One Half Furlongs (Turf)

8/10/24 The Petramalo Mile - $100,000
3 Year Olds, One Mile

8/10/24 The Penny Chenery - $100,000
Fillies 3 Year Olds, Seven Furlongs

STAKES CLOSING WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14

8/31/24 The Meadow Stable VA Restricted - $150,000
(Includes $50,000 for VA Bred & or Sired)
3 Year Olds and Upward Five And One-Half Furlongs (Turf)

8/31/24 The Camptown VA Restricted - $150,000
(Includes $50,000 for VA Bred & or Sired)
Fillies and Mares, 3 Year Olds and
Upward Five And One-Half Furlongs (Turf)

8/31/24 The Bert Allen VA Restricted - $150,000
(Includes $50,000 for VA Bred & or Sired)
3 Year Olds and Upward One Mile One-Sixteenth (Turf)

8/31/24 The Nellie Mae Cox VA Restricted - $150,000
(Includes $50,000 for VA Bred & or Sired)
Fillies and Mares, 3 Year Olds and Upward
One Mile And One-Sixteenth (Turf)

8/31/24 The Jamestown VA Bred/Sired - $125,000
2 Year Olds, Five And One Half Furlongs (Turf)

STAKES CLOSING WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21

9/7/24 The New Kent County Virginia Derby - Grade III - $500,000
3 Year Olds, One Mile And One-Eighth (Turf)

9/7/24 The Virginia Oaks - Listed - $250,000
Fillies 3 Year Olds, One Mile And One-Eighth (Turf)

9/7/24 The Colonial Cup - $150,000
3 Year Olds and Upward, One Mile And One-Half (Turf)

9/7/24 The Da Hoss - $150,000
3 Year Olds and Upward, Five And One-Half Furlongs (Turf)

9/7/24 The Exacta Systems Rosie's Stakes - $125,000
2 Year Olds, Five And One Half-Furlongs (Turf)

9/7/24 The Kitten's Joy - $125,000
2 Year Olds, One Mile And One-Sixteenth (Turf)

NSA STAKES CLOSING WEDNESDAY, JULY 31

8/8/24 The Randolph D. Rouse - $100,000
Fillies & Mares 4 Year Olds, Two And
One-Quarter Miles over National Fences

NSA STAKES CLOSING MONDAY, AUGUST 26

9/5/24 The Life's Illusion - $100,000
Fillies & Mares 4 Year Olds, Two And One-Quarter
Miles over National Fences

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Milestones

Estimated:
At $86.2 million, the economic impact of the Virginia-Certified Residency Program for Thoroughbreds, on Virginia's economy between its creation in 2017 and 2023. Commissioned Virginia Equine Alliance, the study found direct spending of $54.5 million and $1.8 million in tax revenue for state government. The cumulative economic impact is 5.9 times larger than the total incentive payout. The program requires out-of-state Thoroughbreds to reside at least six consecutive months (prior to turning three years old) at Virginia farms to receive a certification as Virginia-certified Thoroughbreds. Upon completion of their residency, those horses qualify to receive bonuses in eligible races. Hundreds of Virginia horse farms participate in the program, receiving income from horse owners and breeders from outside of the state. More than 5,000 horses have participated in the Virginia-Certified Residency program since its inception.

Named:
Monmouth Park racing secretary, Gerry Stanislawzyk, assuming the duties previously held by John Heims, who has moved into a new management role at the track. Stanislawzyk, 52, had served as Monmouth Park's assistant racing secretary since 2016 and has spent the past 10 winters as the stakes

BILL DENVER/EQUI-PHOTO

coordinator at Tampa Bay Downs. "I can't thank Monmouth Park management enough for giving me the opportunity of a lifetime," said Stanislawzyk. "I am so excited to get the meet going. I want to make it one to remember." Troy Matty, a recent graduate of St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, has taken over Stanislawzyk's former role as assistant racing secretary after spending the past seven summers working in Monmouth Park's racing office. Walter Cicero, who has worked in the racing office the past six years, shifts into a new role as stakes coordinator for the track's 79th season.

Requested:
By the American Association of Equine Practitioners, participation in the research phase of an initiative to implement the use of wearable biometric sensors on racehorses. In 2023, the AAEP Racing Committee released a request for proposal soliciting proposals from applicants for a joint project involving the development and application of wearable technologies that would be able to be employed on all Thoroughbred racehorses for races and recorded workouts. Wearable biometric sensors have shown promise in the identification of subclinically affected racehorses or those at risk of musculoskeletal injury. The AAEP received 12 submissions and selected six companies to submit proposals. Each company has been asked to recruit 100 2-year-old Thoroughbreds to wear sensors in 2025 with data collected and analyzed to determine accuracy. Trainers and racing managers are encouraged to consider participating as manufacturers recruit horses for the project. For information, contact Sally Baker at sbaker@aaep.org.

Available:
As a PDF, the 2024 edition of the American Racing Manual, which contains data through 2023, through the Fact Book section of The Jockey Club's website. For more, see jockeyclub.com. In addition, The Jockey Club is accepting feedback for potential modifications to the American Racing Manual, which can be submitted to contactus@jockeyclub.com.

Received:
The 2024 Virgil "Buddy" Raines Distinguished Achievement Award from Monmouth. Park racetrack,

Milestones

EQUI-PHOTO, INC.

New Jersey owner/breeder John Bowers Jr., whose Roseland Farm Stable boasts an impressive list of state-bred stakes winners. The Raines Award, in its 29th year, is presented annually just prior to Monmouth Park's season opener. It honors men and women who have demonstrated a continuing commitment to Thoroughbred racing as an owner, trainer or administrator, and whose conduct has been exemplary for professionalism, integrity and service to the sport. Bowers has twice been honored by the state's Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association as the Breeder of the Year in New Jersey (2020 and 2021). He bred and owned He'spuregold, the state's champion older male in 2022, as well as top New Jersey-bred performers Pickin' Time, Royal Urn and Thistyranthasclass. Bowers also bred Grade 3 winner Smart N Classy, who has a stakes race named for her at Monmouth Park. Stay Smart, a daughter of Smart N Classy bred and owned by Bowers and his long-time advisor Ed Rosen, won the race in 2020. "John Bowers, Jr. has been synonymous with New Jersey-breds for over 40 years," said Michael Campbell, executive director of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey. "His breeding operation has produced horses that can compete in the biggest races, and I am proud they are New Jersey-breds. He is a worthy recipient of the Buddy Raines Award, considering his impact on the New Jersey breeding and racing programs."

Signed:

By Gov. Wes Moore, a new law that enables the state of Maryland to take ownership of Pimlico Race Course and reshape the state's racing industry at the Baltimore track and a training center in a to-be-determined location. The signing took place May 9 and preceded a pending approval from the Board of Public Works the following week of contracts related to the transfer of property. Ultimately, the state would own Pimlico and all racing would be relocated there. Racing will be managed by a not-for-profit, which will retain the Maryland Jockey Club name, but will not include current owners, the Stronach Group and 1/ST Racing. With funding backed by bonds tied to racing's share of slots proceeds in the state, Pimlico will be demolished and rebuilt and a new training center will be constructed. The Laurel Park racetrack property will be retained by 1/ST, with racing there slated to be phased out. The 2025 Preakness, the 150th, would be held at Pimlico but, if the construction timeline holds, the 2026 running would move to Laurel, with a new Pimlico set for use in 2027.

Not Presented:

For 2024, the George Brown Bowl, which was created to celebrate a timber horse for outstanding performance at the My Lady's Manor, Grand National and Maryland Hunt Cup meets. This year's results included several strong performances, but no clear standout over the 10 individual races. Not necessarily presented each year, the award honors George Brown, a Maryland sportsman of the late 1800s and early 1900s. He rode in the Maryland Hunt Cup 14 times over 28 years, winning in 1900 and 1916. He was a master of the Green Spring Valley Hounds and a professional steward at Maryland, Delaware and Florida racetracks.

Correction

Last month's cover photo of Smarty Jones at Equistar Farm was taken by Kim Pratt.

RYAN THOMPSON

Pino races into pickleball now

As Mario Pino wound down his career in racing, he tired of the methods jockeys historically used to make weight, such as sitting for hours on end in a steam room or nibbling at dinner the night before a race.

Pino would often go for a run to take off a couple of pounds, but after moving full-time from Maryland to Florida he shifted gears and added another activity to lose some weight before heading to Gulfstream Park for a day of racing.

Considered one of the best athletes among jockeys, he had played tennis sporadically over the years. This time, in the winter of 2021, he found himself on a pickleball court in his community.

"To be honest, I went over to lose weight because I had to ride that day," he said recently. "Instead of going for a run, I played pickleball. I went over and did that, and I lost my weight."

In the process, Pino found a new passion as many others have done in recent years in transitioning from other sports – or simply full-time jobs – to pickleball. The passion has grown since Pino retired at the end of 2021 season.

"When I retired, I needed something to do," said the 62-year-old. "I needed that [competitive] feel. You find that with all athletes. It fills a void inside of you. You've been competing for 40 years. When I retired, I had nothing to do. Just working out myself. I needed some competition."

He's not alone. Retired NBA star Rick Barry won an age-group national title last year. Former tennis great Ivan Lendl won two tournaments in the highest level aside from professional. The NBA's LeBron James and NFL's Tom Brady invested in professional pickleball franchises. Tennis stars John McEnroe, Andre Agassi, Steffi Graf and Maria Sharapova played in pickleball exhibitions to help grow the sport. And, chances are, you know someone who plays.

If anything, Pino has an even greater void than most given that he rode for 43 years and in 42,630 races.

"Like I told my wife, I had to compete all my life, even to be a jockey," Pino said. "You're competing with yourself, you've got to prove yourself and then every day. I love to win, but I do not feel like I have to win every time. Through the years you get a little tamer. I did it all my life. I don't feel I need to win all the time."

These days, Pino and his wife Christina play nearly every day with friends at their South Florida community and are competing in local pickleball leagues around Palm Beach County.

"I got hooked," he said. "It's a great sport for exercise. It's the only sport I've ever played that I can play two hours straight, and still play. If I spend two days away from it, I get itchy. When I go on trips, I always take my paddle."

As with athletes from other sports, some of the skills Pino had in racing translate well on a pickleball court. As a jockey, he needed soft hands to gently guide horses on the track, a strong grip to keep control of an 1,100-pound partner, plus fast hands and an even-faster mind to make split-second decisions to weave in and out of traffic.

Pickleball requires the same combination, for the soft touch needed to dink or lob or drop a shot at an opponent's feet and the fast hands to get the paddle in the right place in hitting volleys in rapid succession at the net.

"When the horses are running, they feel you and relax with a light grip," Pino said. "It translates to my hands on the paddle. The fast hands, the reaction time [during a race]. It fits into pickeball too."

– Don Markus

THE RACING BIZ

The Independent Voice for Mid-Atlantic Racing and Breeding

Pimlico Persists – The Story of Old Hilltop: The story of Pimlico is one of resilience in the face of innumerable challenges, and one that looks set to continue for years to come, writes Jennifer Kelly.

Julio Hernandez shifts tack to Delaware Park: Establishing himself as one of Penn National's top riders, Julio Hernandez will try to break in at Delaware Park and beyond.

Gigante tabbed VA-bred Horse of the Year: On the strength of the biggest-ever win by a Virginia-bred at Colonial Downs, Smitten Farm-bred Gigante named state-bred 2023 Horse of the Year, Nick Hahn reports.

Indicator looking special, in more ways than one: Charles Town runner Indicator will always have special meaning for his connections, after giving jockey Megan Reap – wife of trainer Vernon Greaves – her first win, writes Ted Black.

Biscuitwiththeboss wins first 2-year-old race in Maryland: Laurel Park's first 2-year-old race of 2024 at saw Biscuitwiththeboss, a full sister to stakes winner Bosserati, prove best, winning by a neck for trainer Brittany Russell, reports Vespe.

— Mid-Atlantic-bred Stakes Winners —

April 12 – May 5

Maryland-bred

AIN'T DA BEER COLD, ch.g., 2018, Freedom Child—Distinct Affair, by With Distinction. B-Matt Spencer & Kelly Cox; O-Matt Spencer, Kelly Cox & Bonuccelli Racing; T-Kenny Cox. $100,000 Native Dancer S, Laurel, April 13.

AWESOME ADRIAN, dk.b./br.g., 2013, Great Notion—River Kwai, by Valley Crossing. B/O-Nancy Reed; T-Kathy Neilson. $35,000 Grand National Timber S, Butler, April 20.

CALL ANOTHER PLAY, ch.f., 2021, Audible—Past as Prelude, by Bernardini. B/O-R. Larry Johnson; T-Mike Trombetta. $125,000 Weber City Miss S, Laurel, April 20.

INTREPID DREAM, dk.b./br.m., 2018, Jess's Dream—Intrepid Tour, by Jump Start. B/O-Paul Fowler Jr.; T-Gary Capuano. $100,000 Heavenly Cause S, Laurel, April 13.

KENNEBEC, b.h., 2018, Lookin At Lucky—Thisdanseistaken, by Gators N Bears. B-The Elkstone Group; O-Sergio Salguero; T-Jose Silva Jr. $60,000 Hasta La Vista S, Turf Paradise, May 4.

WHO'S COUNTING, b.g., 2018, Vancouver (Aus)—Counter Measure, by Henrythenavigator. B/O-South Branch Equine; T-Sean McDermott. $50,000 Good Night Shirt Hurdle S, Foxfield, April 27.

Pennsylvania-bred

DISCO EBO, b.m., 2019, Weigelia—Katarica Disco, by Disco Rico. B-St. Omers Farm; O-Cash is King & LC Racing; T-Robert Reid Jr. $100,000 Primonetta S, Laurel, April 13.

DONTLOOKBACKATALL, dk.b./br.f., 2020, Peace and Justice—Celtic Arch, by Arch. B-A1A Racing; O-West Point Thoroughbreds, Scarlet Oak Racing & Titletown Racing Stables; T-Christophe Clement. $150,000 License Fee S, Belmont At The Big A, May 5.

FAR MO POWER, b.g., 2018, Uncle Lino—J. D. Safari, by Power by Far. B-Peter Giangiulio; O-Joseph Sutton; T-Louis Linder Jr. $100,000 Page McKenney H, Parx, April 22.

MORNING MATCHA, b.m., 2019, Central Banker—Home Ice, by Iam the Iceman. B-Crane Thoroughbred Services; O-LC Racing, Cash is King & Gary Barber; T-Robert Reid Jr. $100,000 Unique Bella S, Parx, April 22.

ROSES FOR DEBRA, gr./ro.m., 2019, Liam's Map—Essential Rose, by Bernardini. B-Blackstone Farm; O-John O'Meara & Cheyenne Stable; T-Christophe Clement. $250,000 Giant's Causeway S-G3, Keeneland, April 13.

WITTY, gr./ro.g., 2019, Great Notion—Zeezee Zoomzoom, by Congrats. B/O/T-Elizabeth Merryman. $100,000 King T. Leatherbury S, Laurel, April 20.

West Virginia-bred

COASTAL MISSION, gr./ro.g., 2019, Great Notion—Smart Crowd, by Crowd Pleaser. B/O-Coleswood Farm; T-Jeff Runco. $100,000 Frank Whiteley S, Laurel, April 13.

ESPRESSO, gr./ro.g., 2020, Juba—Up Close, by Windsor Castle. B/O-Gary Hemp; T-Keith Brown. $75,000 Confucius Say S, Charles Town, April 20.

LIGHTNIN RUNNER, b.f., 2020, Battalion Runner—My Lightnin Strike, by Mineshaft. B-Ronney & Nicole Brown; O-George Nyren; T-Ronney Brown. $75,000 Original Gold S, Charles Town, April 13.

OVERNIGHT POW WOW, gr./ro.f., 2021, Fiber Sonde—Holy Pow Wow, by Indian Charlie. B-John McKee; O-Beau Ridge Farm; T-Cynthia McKee. $75,000 Its Binn Too Long S, Charles Town, April 27.

— Next Chapters —

BY MAGGIE KIMMITT

Preemptive Strike

MAGGIE KIMMITT

The photo captions write themselves: "Find someone who looks at you the way Gail Thayer looks at Preemptive Strike."

Cliché as it seems, the story of the 26-year-old gelding is the stuff of dreams. After two unremarkable starts on the flat as a 2-year-old for breeder/owner Klo Carroll, the son of Roanoke and the Far North mare Mirkwood ended up at Merefield, the 36-acre Unionville, Pa., farm owned by Gail and husband Dixon Thayer.

The Thayers met in 1973 while students at the University of Pennsylvania. Both were Philadelphia-area natives, and Dixon started foxhunting after meeting Gail. Post-graduation, Gail worked in the fashion industry and Dixon became an executive with Scott Paper. During his tenure there, the Thayers lived in Mexico City and Paris, returning to Pennsylvania with their two young sons in 1994.

"We looked at each other and decided it was time to see if we could afford to buy a farm in the Unionville area," Gail said. "We purchased this place in 1995 and called it Merefield, because it was merely a field when we bought it."

Active members of the Cheshire Foxhounds, their indoctrination into jump racing was organic.

"We'd go to the races at Radnor, Cheshire, but we came into racing so ass-backwards; we didn't know anything about anything," Gail said. "So we became Polaris Stable. Polaris being the north star; the star that you would follow."

Their first venture, a timber horse named Clearly Special, lost all three starts. Next came Preemptive Strike, who took the family on a journey through 39 starts over jumps from his 4-year-old season in 2002 until his retirement at 12 in 2010.

Trained first by the late Paul Rowland and then by Sanna Neilson, Preemptive Strike proved a juggernaut from the beginning. Ridden most frequently by Jody Petty and Robbie Walsh, in addition to Paddy Young, the chestnut regularly faced steeplechasing's heaviest hitters of the time –

McDynamo, Sur La Tete, Hirapour (Ire), Slip Away, Good Night Shirt, Mixed Up and others.

Preemptive Strike broke his maiden with Petty at Saratoga's Open House in July 2002. His first stakes score came at Florida's Little Everglades meet with Walsh in March 2004, kicking off a season that stamped him as an Eclipse Award finalist. In addition to the Little Everglades, Walsh and Preemptive Strike also won the Carolina Cup at Camden, S.C., and the Appleton Stakes at Far Hills, N.J. He earned the title of Maryland-bred champion steeplechaser.

They parlayed that success into 2005, winning the Georgia Cup at Atlanta in April. For Walsh, their most memorable collaboration took place at the Meadowlands in October 2005.

After riding in Virginia that day, Walsh boarded a private plane to New Jersey to ride Preemptive Strike in the featured Somerset Medical Center Handicap.

"It was a Grade 2 under the lights," Walsh said. "We were 30 lengths clear after the first six hurdles. After about 6 furlongs, he took a deep breath and relaxed, and I just sat there and let him rock. He led the whole way and beat [three-time champion] McDynamo by 5 lengths. I got back on the plane and flew home to Virginia after the race.

"Preemptive Strike was a proper keen horse; a front-running lunatic," Walsh said. "And he put me on a different level as a rider."

After missing the 2006 season, Preemptive Strike returned in 2007 with trainer Sanna Neilson and eventually was reunited with Petty.

"He was one of the most competitive horses I ever sat on in my life," Petty said. "He was out there for one reason – and that was to win. But he was really neat because when he would run well and finish second, it didn't mess with his mind. He'd go out there and run exactly the same way next time. He was like, 'Ehh – so they beat me last time. Watch this time.' "

Petty never won another race on the horse. Preemptive Strike's final score came in the Imperial Cup at Aiken in March 2008. Petty was injured earlier on the card, and Carl Rafter filled in.

"When I tell people this, they're a little mind-blown," Petty said, "But I think Robbie rode him better than I did. He actually got along better with that horse at the time. And then once I watched Robbie ride him, later in life when I rode him again it made me ride him better. My riding style and Robbie's were completely different. I had a hard time sitting still except on Preemptive Strike – on that, I sat still."

Walsh and Petty both emphasized the same essential truth – there was no arguing with Preemptive Strike. It was his opinion, his way, and there was no point starting a fight you'd never win.

"He was one of the most competitive horses I ever sat on in my life. He was out there for one reason – and that was to win."

– Jody Petty, on riding Preemptive Strike

According to Petty, some of the gelding's best performances were seconds in major stakes. In November 2008, Preemptive Strike set the pace in the 2¾-mile Colonial Cup and led over the last fence before losing a stretch battle to fellow Maryland-bred, eventual champion and future Hall of Famer Good Night Shirt by a neck. They clashed again the following March, in the Carolina Cup going 2¼ miles. Once more, Preemptive Strike settled for second.

"That's about as close as anyone ever got to Good Night Shirt," Petty said. "And Preemptive Strike was 11 at the time. There was no bigger heart than his. There are not a lot of horses like him."

Though he never won a Grade 1, Preemptive Strike finished second in six – to champions Hirapour, Mixed Up, Good Night Shirt and Slip Away.

Preemptive Strike furnished the Thayers' home with plenty of silver, photographs and artwork, including an oil painting by Booth Malone of Preemptive Strike and Walsh at Springdale Race Course. It's a casual pose with the horse at a walk, head turned toward the artist, and Walsh in jeans and a polo shirt. The expression on the gelding's face is the same easily recognized today. Confident, strong, oozing a compelling presence that commands attention.

"It's been a love affair," Gail Thayer said more than once. "I had this conversation with [photographer] Tod Marks at one point. I said I needed a photo of him in the paddock. Tod said, 'But he didn't win.' I said I didn't care; it was a family experience. I always said to the jockeys, 'Just bring him back in one piece. I don't care about anything else.' "

Gail told of the time that the horse contracted shipping fever on the way home from Atlanta, requiring a lengthy

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layoff. A high fever caused a hoof problem that took several months to clear.

"All the heat went down into that foot," said Gail. "We changed the bandages twice a day, and he couldn't do anything. Toward the last few months, he could go out and hand-walk. But it was not easy. He was not a patient patient."

Joy far outweighed worry over the past 23 years, as special memories attest. A trip to Los Angeles for the 2004 Eclipse Awards in January 2005 was surreal. The Thayers sat with another party from Pennsylvania – Roy and Pat Chapman and the Smarty Jones camp.

"We had known him since I was a teenager because we foxhunted together," Gail said of Roy Chapman. "So even though we didn't win the Eclipse Award, and we didn't expect to win, it was an experience we otherwise would never have had."

Gail laughs when remembering her preparations for that evening. With Dixon's encouragement, she decided to treat herself to hair and makeup appointments at the salon in the Beverly Hills Hotel.

"The lady doing my makeup kept giggling with her friends. I asked if I had spinach in my teeth or something. She said 'No, it's just so funny. When we do hair and makeup for the Academy Awards and all these other things, everyone is always talking about themselves or other people. But all you ladies talk about are your horses. What shoes they had on, the way they ran.' She said, 'We just can't get over the fact that that is important to you.' "

Preemptive Strike's final race was the Colonial Cup-G1 in November 2010. After setting the pace for 2 miles, he finished second to Slip Away, whose performance that day was a tour de force 25¾-length win. Preemptive Strike headed home to Merefield with a record of 41-8-13-7 and $494,398 to his credit.

"After he retired, we gave him about a year off," Gail said. "Then I decided I was going to ride him. It wasn't a big mistake as long as we walked. And I was always with someone. But the second he took even one trot step, he thought that meant he could gallop. I was thinking I was so cool, riding Strike. We have these little logs in our top field back from when my boys were little. They'd ride their ponies and hop over those logs. So I thought, 'I wonder what it's like to jump him, now that he's retired.' I walked him up to the log, he took one trot stride and *launched* long like he did when he was racing. I got left so bad, and never did it again. . . I had a whole new respect for jump riders after that. I had no clue what that feeling was, the way he jumped. And I know other horses don't jump like that."

■

VICTORY
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Congratulations to all the connections!

Graham Motion-trained Trikari wins Grade 2 American Turf S

Joe Davies-trained Blackhall (Ire) wins Maryland Hunt Cup

Jack Fisher-trained Schoodic wins Virginia Gold Cup

Joe Davies-trained Our Friend wins My Lady's Manor S

Blythe Miller Davies-trained Wagner (Ire) wins Voss Memorial

Willie Dowling-trained Druid's Altar (Ire) wins Voss Memorial

Joe Davies-trained Mr. Fine Threads wins Murray Memorial

Joe Davies-trained Bogey's Image wins Western Run Plate

Mark Beecher-trained Road to Oz wins Bonsal Memorial

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— From the editor —

BY JOE CLANCY

Look to, be hopeful about the future

Hurry up. Report. Write. Edit. Design. Produce. Over here in magazine land, we're focused on creating this thing you're holding in your hands or perhaps scrolling through on your device. Either way, trust us, it's a process. We balance page counts (in multiples of eight, sometimes 16), revenue, expenses, stories we want to do, stories we have to do and time, always time.

We know horse people play the same game. Breed, foal, wean, break, train, buy, sell, race, feed, water, treat, retire and on and on. The sheer volume of decisions to be made for a Thoroughbred would fill a good-sized container ship. Multiply by all the past, present and future Thoroughbreds in the region and well, take a deep breath people.

Or try to. Slow down, look ahead, be positive. Think of the future and appreciate the opportunity.

Maryland racing stands, finally, at a spot in the road that might actually produce a cohesive, functioning industry where breeders, owners, trainers and track management work toward the same things. Three, OK maybe four, please don't make it be five, years from now we'll know so much more. Did the not-for-profit operator put together the right board and management team? Did the construction of a new Pimlico Race Course actually start to revitalize Baltimore's Park Heights community? How did the training center work out? Did the math work? Did the facility produce better racing,

bigger fields, a more stabilized breeding program, a schedule that fit with the other tracks in the region?

From here, the hiring of racing executive Corey Johnsen as an interim CEO in Maryland was a step toward answering all of those questions – and a few more – in a positive way. His background includes senior management positions at Remington Park and Lone Star Park racetracks. He was president and co-owner of Kentucky Downs from 2007-19, overseeing a resurgence and a sale in 2019. Before that he worked at Turf Paradise, Arlington Park and Louisiana Downs. He has owned racehorses. He chaired the Kentucky Equine Education Project and served on the boards of the Texas Thoroughbred Association and Old Friends among others. At the Preakness, he talked about a desire to work with stakeholders – breeders, owners, trainers and the community – to improve Maryland racing. He talked about the potential at Fair Hill. He was optimistic. He listened, and he plans to listen more. I'll take it.

The Maryland situation will probably mean fewer racing dates in the state. That sounds like a negative, but I hope it shifts to a positive by forcing regional tracks to finally discuss a circuit. Delaware Park, Monmouth Park, Colonial Downs, Parx Racing, Penn National, Charles Town and Pimlico cannot possibly all thrive if they don't work together. Not in a Thoroughbred climate with fewer horses produced and competition for the gambling dollar at an all-time high. Stay ultra-competitive and uncooperative and the sport will continue to shrink. Work together, adapt, change for good and the sport just might thrive.

The 2024 Preakness Stakes included a Pennsylvania-bred, Uncle Heavy, by a stallion who stood in the state at the time. His dam raced in the region and cost $1,700 at Timonium. His breeder, owners and trainer brought deep Mid-Atlantic roots. Another member of the Preakness field, Mugatu, was by Maryland stallion Blofeld. Neither handled the mud at Pimlico all that well, but they were there and at least hinted at future success.

Push all that ahead those three, four, five years, blend it with a new Pimlico and regional cooperation; then maybe we'll have something to really stop and appreciate.

Mrs. Bolton

Her name never appeared in a program, that was reserved for her husband Perry, son George and a big cast of friends from Maryland's hunt country, but Aurelia Bolton was a racing fixture who brightened every day I saw her.

Bolton, officially Aurelia Garland Bolton, died April 26. She was 88 and lived a life. The daughter of Charles Stedman Garland and Aurelia Stoner Garland, was born in Bryn Mawr, Pa., and spent her early years in Lake Forest, Ill., before moving to Baltimore in 1939.

She graduated from Garrison Forest, got a degree from Vassar College, married Perry in 1959 and later worked at what is now the Walters Art Museum. In pursuit of philanthropic causes she cared about, she joined the board at Walters, and also at Johns Hopkins University. In the 1980s, she founded the Homewood Restoration Advisory Council and served as its first president, overseeing the restoration of the Johns Hopkins property and the creation of the Homewood Museum.

There were more endeavors, a job as a Sotheby's representative, an interest in horses and racing, the summitting of all 46 high peaks of the Adirondacks, three children, eight grandchildren, a 65-year marriage and scores of friends. At least two racehorses were named for her – Lady Aurelia won Group 1 races at Deauville and Royal Ascot; My Miss Aurelia was a champion.

I'll miss seeing their namesake at the races. ■

JIM MCCUE

The Steeplechase Times

MARYLAND HUNT CUP

Timber Classic

IRISH-BRED BLACKHALL PREVAILS IN THRILLER FOR KINROSS, DAVIES

By Joe Clancy

Over some 36 years in flat and jump racing, the gray and blue Kinross Farm silks found their way to many winner's circles after scores of races – three Virginia Gold Cups, two editions of the Iroquois Steeplechase-G1, the $1 million Charles Town Classic, even a maiden special weight about seven hours before Rachel Alexandra made history at Pimlico Race Course on Preakness Day 2009. The list is long and fruitful.

But the Maryland Hunt Cup, long a goal, managed to elude Kinross, owner Zohar Ben-Dov and a lengthy list of entrants. In 2013, Sand Box Rules finished second. In 2017, Old Timer lost his jockey while leading at the second-last. Others fell at the third fence and the 16th. They pulled up, finished last, you name it. The oldest steeplechase in North America all but hid from the Virginian.

The race remained a peak to be scaled, a challenge to be accepted. Four miles, 22 fences, nearly 130 years of history will do that to a race. And a person.

"The Maryland Hunt Cup requires thinking, it requires a great horse and it requires a gutsy jockey all put together by the trainer on one day," Ben-Dov said. "You know the beauty about this race, this particular race? The entire community is very psyched about it and it's one race. It's a beautiful thing. You have to beat the course, not beat but you have to fight with the course. You have to beat the other horses. You have to beat the other trainers and riders and owners."

Kinross colorbearer Blackhall (Ire) beat them all in the 2024 Hunt Cup, navigating the fences, miles, foes and demons to prevail in a four-way scramble to the finish line in the Worthington Valley April 27. Trained by Joe Davies and ridden by Englishman Charlie Marshall, Blackhall won by a neck over Shootist, who was a half-length in front of Goodoldtimes (Ire), who had a length on two-time Hunt Cup winner Vintage Vinnie (Ire). The only other finisher, Rocket Star Red, was 18 lengths back in fifth. The final time of 8:17 was the second-fastest in history, behind only Vintage Vinnie's 8:15 of two years ago.

None of it was lost on Ben-Dov, who watched on the hill overlooking the course.

JIM GRAHAM

After 22 fences and nearly 4 miles, Hunt Cup competitors (from left) Goodoldtimes, Blackhall, Vintage Vinnie and Shootist head for the finish. Blackhall and jockey Charlie Marshall prevailed by a neck over Shootist.

"I watched every progression, you can't get excited early on or even midway," he said. "You can't. There are too many questions to go, and too many obstacles. Perfectly good horses fall, or something goes wrong. I know. I've been there."

Nothing went wrong for Blackhall, who picked the right day to turn in the race of his 10-year-old life.

Bred by Ann Fortune, Blackhall lost eight starts on the flat – the last three by a combined 239 lengths – before finding his way to the Doyle family's Irish point-to-point yard Baltimore Stables in 2019. The following November, he won a 3-mile maiden chase for 6-year-olds and up at the Borris House Point-to-Point in County Carlow. American steeplechase trainer Keri Brion met the horse while based with the Doyles that winter and tipped him to Davies as a potential timber horse.

The chestnut son of Caspar Netscher (GB), a Group 2 winner in England and Germany who finished eighth in the 2014 Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint-G2, didn't immediately join the upper ranks of a stable known for its Hunt Cup prospects. Blackhall won a three-horse race at Howard County Point-to-Point in 2021. In 2022, he prevailed in a pair of two-horse point-to-point starts before losing three National Steeplechase Association starts including the Hunt Cup where he was the last of five finishers, 103 lengths behind Vintage Vinnie. Last

year, off two point-to-point runs, he finished second in the allowance timber at the Grand National and gave the Hunt Cup another try. He fell at the 16th while out of contention.

Back for his 10-year-old season, Blackhall finished second in a two-horse race at the Green Spring Valley Point-to-Point March 31 and was a decent if non-threatening sixth in a maiden timber at My Lady's Manor. A week later at the Grand National, Davies turned to Marshall, a British amateur with 57 point-to-point victories and among the top 15 in the 2023-24 standings. After jumping the first timber fence of his life two days earlier, Marshall finished second to the Davies-trained Mr. Fine Threads in the allowance.

For several years, Davies has sought out European amateur jockeys for the Hunt Cup. They typically have more experience than American counterparts, even if they've never seen a timber fence. Marshall, who runs a Dorset point-to-point yard with his fiancé Hannah Clarke, made the most of the opportunity after missing out on the 2020 Hunt Cup due to Covid.

"I've been dying to do it," Marshall said of riding in the Hunt Cup. "I've done all the big rides in England like the Melton, cross-country rides, the foxhunters around the Grand National course, but I just wanted to do this. It's such a prestigious race and just I love riding cross country. I grew up foxhunting in England, jumping big hedges, team chasing and this is the combination of that and racing and I think that set me up quite well."

Jumping "hundreds" of timber rails in less than 10 days at Davies' Maryland farm didn't hurt, and neither did the ride aboard Blackhall at the Grand National.

"He went very well last week so I was confident, and he actually felt better schooling yesterday than he did before the race last week," said the 26-year-old. "He just had a bit of confidence to him. He finished the race well last week without me being too hard on him."

Despite opting for the more experienced Marshall, Davies gave American apprentice Theresa Dimpfel credit for helping Blackhall learn the basics. She rode him in four NSA starts and another five point-to-point tries.

"I really think having a young rider like Theresa ride the horse helped," Davies said. "There were no hard races. She gave him good experiences and that has to help. Charlie has ridden hundreds of races though, which has to help too."

Raceday

If somebody posted morning-line odds on the 2024 Hunt Cup, Blackhall would have been down the list of nine.

Vintage Vinnie returned at 15, carrying his two wins over the course. Age, a pull-up in last year's race and a second at the Manor two weeks earlier provided the question marks for the Armata Stable runner trained by Davies and ridden by his son Teddy. Withoutmoreado (Ire) won the 2023 Hunt Cup for Irv Naylor and Kathy Neilson, but struggled in two starts this spring – last of four at Cheshire and a lost rider in the Grand National. Last year's runner-up Royal Ruse won the 2023 Pennsylvania Hunt Cup for Charlie Fenwick and Sanna Neilson and prepped with two spring starts – a second at Cheshire and a fourth at the Manor. Mr. Fine Threads, also representing Armata and Davies, came off a win but made his Hunt Cup debut. Another Armata runner, the Mark Beecher-trained Goodoldtimes (Ire), was third in 2022 but lost his jockey at the 11th in 2023 and fell midway through the Grand National a week earlier. Upland Partners' Shootist pulled up last year for trainer Todd McKenna, but came in off a third in the Grand National while teaming up with jockey Freddie Procter. Rocket Star Red jumped around the Hunt Cup in 2021 and 2022 for Beecher and owner Lucy Goelet, but fell at the 13th last year. Merriebelle Stable's Wagner (Ire) brought plenty of English form, but gave up experience. In his corner were a win at the Manor and an even-better jumping performance before going off course at the Grand National, plus Hunt Cup winners in trainer Blythe Miller Davies and jockey Eric Poretz.

DOUGLAS LEES

Trainer Joe Davies (left) and Kinross Farm owner Zohar Ben-Dov walk to the trophy presentation after Blackhall's victory.

DOUGLAS LEES (4)

Action at the third fence (top row): Royal Ruse leads Blackhall and Rocket Star Red; Shootist touches down safely; leader Vintage Vinnie scales the 13th while seeking his third Maryland Hunt Cup win.

This year's Hunt Cup jockeys (from left): Freddie Procter, Andrew Burke Ott, Charlie Marshall, Dan Nevin, Eric Poretz, Brett Owings, Conor Tierney, Teddy Davies and Elizabeth Scully.

Raceday rain softened the course a little, but mainly gave the participants something to fret about.

Vintage Vinnie made the early running. As in 2023, Withoutmoreado and Conor Tierney stayed in touch while second, followed by Royal Ruse, Blackhall and Rocket Star Red. Vintage Vinnie flew the 4-foot-9 third fence. Withoutmoreado hopped it and landed on all fours. Mr. Fine Threads and Andrew Burke Ott fell. At the sixth, Vintage Vinnie led by 2 lengths over Withoutmoreado, 10 clear of Royal Ruse, followed by Blackhall, Rocket Star Red, Shootist, Wagner and Goodoldtimes.

Tierney came off Withoutmoreado after a steep landing at the ninth fence, handing Vintage Vinnie a wider advantage. The leader went for a short spot at the 10th, bobbled and nearly lost his scrambling jockey. Disaster averted, they carried a 15-length advantage into the 12th, where Royal Ruse took out two rails and lost Elizabeth Scully. At the 13th, 4-foot-9 companion to the third, Vintage Vinnie got in tight but lost

TISA DELLA-VOLPE

Blackhall (center) rallies past Vintage Vinnie (left) as Goodoldtimes mounts a charge at the last fence.

little time. As a loose Royal Ruse sailed high over the even taller wing to the left of the fence, Shootist jumped into second. Just behind Shootist and next to Royal Ruse, Blackhall twisted a bit. Behind them Wagner went to his nose, but recovered and Goodoldtimes nearly went down as well.

Poretz set Wagner in motion coming to the 15th and the 9-year-old swept into second. The uphill (and 4-foot-10) 16th fence asked a big question everyone managed to answer. Vintage Vinnie still led, but slowed to set himself.

Fifteen lengths back came Wagner, whose lack of experience finally caught up to him at the 17th. He clipped the top rail in front, pitched forward and couldn't complete the landing, sliding to his right as the others galloped past.

Now a clear second, Marshall glanced behind him and worried about what was in front.

"Don't chase him, don't chase him," the jockey told himself of Vintage Vinnie. "Don't go with him, don't go with him."

Not that he wasn't assessing his horse throughout the race.

"He just jumped fence to fence," Marshall said. "I was in such a lovely rhythm and at 16, 17, 18 every single time I was able to fill him up, take a pull, fill him up, take a pull and fill him up again."

Vintage Vinnie soldiered on. He led over 18 and 19, and turned toward the 20th. He set himself for that and crossed Tufton Avenue still well clear. Behind him, the others pooled together for a potential last challenge.

Marshall gave his mount a squeeze and liked the response. Blackhall came alive. "Oh we've got something here," his jockey thought.

"I was cautious about getting straight on the road crossing so I didn't slip," Marshall said. "I got straight, went across the road and then I gave him a kick. I was chasing Teddy down."

At the tricky 21st, a leaning board fence over a small brook, Vintage Vinnie's lead shrunk as Blackhall "winged" the fence and accelerated up the course's final hill. He brought Goodoldtimes and Shootist into the frame as Rocket Star

DOUGLAS LEES

Lely Yanega leads Maryland Hunt Cup winners Blackhall and Charlie Marshall to the winner's circle.

Hey, Charlie Marshall, did any of the Maryland Hunt Cup's 22 fences give Blackhall trouble?

"Thirteen was the only one but it was more because coming down to it I had horses either side and he slightly lost his concentration. It just meant that I got down to the bottom of it rather than winged it. Apart from that, he had not one jumping problem. He didn't break a rail, didn't clip one, didn't stumble on landing. He just jumped around there."

Red couldn't match the pace. Blackhall got there first, drawing abreast of the leader at the last fence and flying it. To his right, game but tired, Vintage Vinnie jumped with less power and landed second. Behind them, Goodoldtimes and Shootist kept finding to set up a final rally. They passed Vintage Vinnie in mid-stretch, with Shootist chipping into Blackhall's advantage. He got to the winner's girth, but not much farther as Blackhall – long neck nearly level with his withers – hung on for the first official win of his career.

"He just flew home," Marshall said. "That was the best feeling in the world. I've ridden big races in England, but I haven't won them so to cross the line first in the Maryland Hunt Cup is special."

By most accounts, though nobody's checking old birth certificates, he's the first Briton to win the race which dates to 1894. Irish-born Anne Moran won aboard Buck Jakes in 1995 and again in 1997. Since then, her countrymen Brian Moran, Mark Beecher, Dan Nevin and Tierney joined her, as did Frenchman Gonzague Cottreau.

Marshall called Joe Davies and assistant Ashton Williams great "coaches" coming into the race. They walked the course, talked strategy, went over what the pre-race weather meant for his chances and provided a calming base of knowledge.

"The mental part of it was huge," Marshall said. "I had never jumped timber in my life and every bit of advice mattered and I had the horse underneath me to do it. He jumped great, I was always where I wanted to be."

Just like the owner. He and Davies met at the finish line after Blackhall completed the job and before the traditional hay-wagon trophy presentation in the paddock.

"What do you say now, boy?" Davies hollered before a bear hug with his client. "Did I tell you I was going to get you up on that wagon?"

"Yes, you did," said Ben-Dov. "Yes, you did."

Davies won the Hunt Cup for the seventh time as a trainer, all in the last eight years, to go along with three victories as a jockey. The barn focuses on producing Hunt Cup horses, be they high-value imports or less-heralded projects from the flat track.

Winning is the challenge, delivering for owners such as Ben-Dov the reward.

"I couldn't be happier for the opportunity to train for someone like Zohar and to be able to deliver that, especially at this stage of his life, that's why I do it really," Davies said. "He was so close to winning a few times. It's a lifetime thing. To be able to deliver that for him matters." ■

The Steeplechase Times

GRAND NATIONAL RACES

Preferred Route

AWESOME ADRIAN CAPTURES TIMBER STAKES OVER NEW COURSE

By Joe Clancy ■ *Photographs by Douglas Lees*

As far as Awesome Adrian and jockey Teddy Davies are concerned, the course for the Grand National timber meet could have changed sooner. Altered after 77 years when one of the properties used for the long, galloping course changed owners, the new version came to be for a four-race card April 20 in Butler, Md.

Awesome Adrian won the feature, after finishing second two years ago and skipping the 2023 version. Davies rode the 11-year-old Maryland-bred and two other winners on the day. In the off-season, organizers led by co-chair Forrest Kelly and Ned Worthington built new fences and crafted 3¼ miles out of less acreage. There were more turns, but the course drew praise for its layout and improved viewing.

Davies, one of the leading amateur jockeys on the Maryland circuit for three seasons, never won a race on the old course so was definitely a fan.

"It's different, and not as much a galloping course as it was, but it actually rode a lot better than you would think looking at the course map," Davies said. "It rides really well. Forrest did a great job. There are no tight turns, the jumps come up the way they should. I liked it."

Easy to say when you win three, a year after breaking your collarbone in a fall.

Awesome Adrian got the day started, winning the $35,000 Grand National for owner/breeder Nancy Reed and trainer Kathy Neilson. The race's 121st running drew a field of six, headed by 2023 Maryland Hunt Cup winner Withoutmoreado (Ire) and 2022 Grand National winner Road to Oz, plus 2021 Pennsylvania Hunt Cup winner Goodoldtimes (Ire) and course winners Great Road and Shootist.

Awesome Adrian won the allowance race over the course in 2021, but couldn't handle Road to Oz when second in the 2022 feature. The dark bay went to the Manor in 2023 and bypassed the Grand National in favor of Willowdale, where he won a $10,000 apprentice race. This year, he started early with a second at Cheshire March 31 and a third in the Manor's apprentice race April 13. A four-time winner over timber, he came into the Grand National without a stakes victory.

Reed and Neilson were out to change that this spring.

"Nancy asked about putting him in a stakes race and I was like, 'How about this week?' " Neilson said of a pre-race conversation with the owner, who missed the Grand National to attend a family wedding. Reed watched the livestream from a hotel room, with grandson (and horse's namesake) Adrian Reed just down the hall.

No one wanted the lead early as the field trotted away from the start. Great Road, trained by Davies' father Joe, ultimately made the early running. Awesome Adrian drafted into second by the third fence, where Withoutmoreado clobbered the top rail. He lost Conor Tierney with a sloppy leap at the eighth as Great Road led Shootist, Awesome Adrian, Goodoldtimes and Road to Oz in a tight group. Goodoldtimes fell at the 12th, leaving four, as the pace quickened. Great Road rattled the 14th fence and Awesome Adrian seized a lead he never relinquished.

Maryland-bred Awesome Adrian flies the last fence of the Grand National timber stakes.

Road to Oz narrowed the gap coming to the third-last, but got in a little tight and lost momentum as Awesome Adrian won by 4½ lengths in 6:47.40. Fellow Maryland-bred Road to Oz settled for second in a reverse of the 2022 race's exacta, and Shootist rallied for third.

"He's a fun ride," said Davies, whose mounts normally come from his father Joe's timber stable. "Huge thank you for Kathy to give me the ride. We were trying to figure out what horses to run from our barn and Kathy said she was going to run him, and I thought he would be a great ride around here. I'm a big believer that horses like specific courses."

Neilson was hoping the new course configuration would help her horse, who can get running too freely in some races.

"If it's a real galloping course, he can lock on the bridle and really get going too fast and doing too much early," she said. "The old course you'd have to be real strategic about when you hit the lead. This course, the jumping is pretty tricky and that suits him because he's a wicked good jumper."

Awesome Adrian won for the seventh time in a career that began as a 3-year-old hurdler in 2016. He lost his first 12 races over hurdles and on the flat before breaking through in a $5,000 claimer on the dirt at Penn National in October

Second at the same meet in 2023, The Butler Yates (right) follows Take Profit early in the maiden timber.

2017. Two months later, he won for the same price going a mile at Laurel Park. Neilson lost him via a $10,000 claim by owner/trainer Sam Davis in February 2018. Two starts later, she claimed him back for $16,000 and Awesome Adrian has been a timber horse – with two dismal tries at Delaware Park in 2018 – since.

He broke his maiden over timber in 2019, started just once in 2020 and posted solo scores in 2021, 2022 and 2023 – all while proving to be a more-than-capable foxhunter for Neilson, who relayed a late-season adventure while giving another rider a lead over a fence.

"He couldn't get his horse to jump and I said, 'No problem, I'll give you a lead,' " she said. "I give Adrian a tap on the shoulder, turned toward the fence and he sailed this four-railer beautifully. There was an orchard on the other side and we went straight into the orchard and he just navigated his way through there. No problem. Never put a foot wrong.

"I guess what I'm trying to say is he trains himself, does what he wants to do. If he feels really energetic and wants to go fast, he goes fast."

Orchard or no orchard.

By Great Notion out of the Valley Crossing mare River Kwai, Awesome Adrian finished second in the Virginia Gold Cup two weeks after the Grand National.

The Undercard

Four horses contested the $15,000 maiden timber, and The Butler Yates (Ire) went one better than his second last year. The 7-year-old, who races for the Greenlights ownership group, was forced off course while in contention late a week earlier at the Manor.

"I was delighted with him," said Freddie Procter who rode the winner for trainer Leslie Young. "It makes up for last week. He's a horse you really need to run fresh, so I wasn't thrilled about bringing him back here this week but I thought I was on the winner last week at the Manor. He deserved to win this one."

The son of European champion stayer Yeats was second twice last season, in the Grand National maiden and again at Genesee Valley in October. This time, he let Take Profit get a long lead, made the front turning for home and fought off Island Nation (Ire) by a length with The Ballybreen Fox (Ire) 1¾ lengths back in third after 3 miles in 6:20.

"He's finally got his nose in front," said Procter. "He was a nice second here last year and he's won two point-to-points down at Piedmont and I was joking earlier that we might have to get them to write some sanctioned races down there for him. He ran a great race here last year, just a bit green at some of his fences. You know he's good enough to win a race and he

Mr. Fine Threads, one of three Maryland-breds to win on the day, heads to victory in the Benjamin Murray.

just wasn't able to do it until today. Everything went right. It's great for the owners because they've stuck by the horse."

While The Butler Yates rewarded a relatively new ownership group, Mr. Fine Threads produced for a longtime fixture of the steeplechase circuit Armata Stables in the $20,000 Benjamin Murray Memorial.

The cherry and old gold halves belonging to Perry Bolton and Ben Griswold IV have graced a Maryland Hunt Cup winner three times in Welter Weight and dual victor Vintage Vinnie (Ire), plus crossed the finish line first in numerous other races on the calendar.

None of it is lost on Armata. Ben Griswold III helped design the Grand National course this year's replaced. His son Ben IV and wife Wendy live on the Grand National property in a house previously owned by Maryland timber legend Redmond Stewart Jr. and his wife Ann. Griswold won the Murray as a rider in 1957, so appreciated holding the cup 67 years later.

"It's sort of slightly better than winning the Super Bowl or the World Series or the World Cup in soccer," Griswold said about winning a Maryland timber race. "Maryland timber racing is the pinnacle, the Mount Everest, and why do people want to climb Mount Everest? Because it's there. These races are there."

Mr. Fine Threads was there this year, his third as a timber horse after five winless hurdle starts in 2019 and 2020. The 11-year-old son of Sightseeing won a maiden timber in 2022 only to be disqualified for a medication violation. Last year, he finished second at the Manor and won at Genesee Valley. In the 2024 Murray, the Maryland-bred settled off the pace of early leader Wagner (Ire), who won a maiden race at the Manor a week earlier. The 2024 import set a slow pace after

Bogey's Image heads to victory ahead of Chosen Mate in the Western Run Plate.

the field was wildly tardy leaving the starter and looked comfortable in just his second timber start, but jumped the wrong side of fence 14 and was pulled up for being off course.

Rocket Star Red inherited the lead, with Blackhall (Ire) and Mr. Fine Threads in close pursuit. Given some rein by Davies, Mr. Fine Threads took command four fences from the finish, flew the last two with authority and won by 4½ lengths. Blackhall finished second with Rocket Star Red third after 3¼ miles in 7:19.40 though the field was wildly slow leaving the starter.

The winner races without front shoes to protect some troubling hooves, but had no problems with his grip in the Murray.

"He's come a long way," said Davies. "He was a bit unlucky a couple times just not winning. I had a fall on him at the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup last year. But he showed up today."

The jockey gave his mother, former champion jump jockey Blythe, credit for some riding tips aboard the winner after watching his race at the Elkridge-Harford Point-to-Point April 6.

"She told me I needed to be more confident," Davies said. "He's a big horse, he's made mistakes in the past where he gets in close and a lot of Maryland timber horses you can kind of let them pick their spot and they can figure it out, but he doesn't do that without the confidence. Today, I just rode him to the big spot and he took it every time."

One race later, Davies was back in the winner's circle after Bogey's Image handled three others in the $15,000 Western Run Plate timber for apprentice jockeys. Trained by Joe Davies, like Mr. Fine Threads, the winner put his long stride to work early and led throughout while winning a 35¼-length laugher after 3 miles in 6:16.80. Paddy's Crown finished second with Chosen Mate (Ire) third.

The Maryland-bred son of Imagining and the Hurricane Run (Ire) mare Casablanca Lily (Ire) started out over hurdles for breeder South Branch Equine, winning once and finishing second twice in five tries. Sold to Harvey Goolsby, Achsah O'Donovan and Dan Colhoun, the 7-year-old switched to timber in 2022 and was third in the maiden at the Grand National. The chestnut won it a year later and hinted at big things with a third in the 4-mile Virginia Gold Cup May 4.

"He had a huge future as a hurdle horse," said Teddy Davies, no longer an apprentice after collecting his 15th win. "Like a lot of timber horses he needs to settle. He's fast enough and he's been winning races, but we finally got him to settle more. We did a lot of hunting with him and today we were up front, but he just settles better now."

■

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The Steeplechase Times

MY LADY'S MANOR RACES

Best Pal

OUR FRIEND PUTS IT TOGETHER TO WIN TIMBER STAKES FOR ARMATA, DAVIES

By Joe Clancy ■ *Photographs by Douglas Lees*

Early in the Maryland timber season, trainer Joe Davies mapped out schedules for his horses – juggling race conditions, past performances, jockeys, owners and the usual – and figured to send Our Friend (Ire) to the Grand National timber stakes April 20.

Then again . . . Our Friend fell there in 2022 and 2023, and won his timber debut in the My Lady's Manor maiden. When Davies realized the April 13 Manor card expanded to include a non-winners of two that fit stablemate To Be Or Not to Be, Our Friend headed to Monkton instead of Butler.

Good choice.

Our Friend rated early in the $50,000 Manor, finding a comfort zone behind leader Salamanca School (Fr) and with fellow stalkers Royal Ruse and Road to Oz as the late-running Include It settled in fifth. Run for the 113th time, the race turned into a sprint over the final four fences. Salamanca School still led. Royal Ruse moved to second and kicked on down the hill to the third-last along Jarrettsville Pike. Last year's Pennsylvania Hunt Cup winner flew that fence and seized control from Salamanca School as Road to Oz and Our Friend tried to cover the move. Two lengths up on the final turn, Royal Ruse towed Our Friend into the last but chipped in, took out a rail and lost momentum. Our Friend landed in front and headed toward the last as Include It revved up his bid. The Maryland-bred touched down in second over the last, chopped into the margin but couldn't get past as Our Friend and jockey Teddy Davies scored by a neck for Armata Stable. Road to Oz finished third after 3 miles in 6:20.50.

"Horses like certain courses and he loves this course," said the jockey and trainer's son. "He won here before and I really wanted to run him back here. Dad was thinking we'd have to go to the Grand National but they wrote that other race so we could put him in the big race here and it turned out to be good decision."

Our Friend won for the third time in eight National Steeplechase Association timber starts after scoring once each over hurdles and chase fences in Ireland. The son of Shantou enjoys the Manor course, which meanders like an old stream and challenges horses with a mix of hills, stiff jumping tests and right and left turns.

"It's nothing specific," said Teddy Davies, a University of Delaware student who spends his spring weekends at steeplechase meets. "He needs bigger fences to back him off, but the Grand National has been a little bit too much of a step up for him. He jumps well here, figures it out when I leave it to him. He gets distracted with his jumping sometimes."

Equipped with blinkers this spring, Our Friend stayed focused and saved enough to turn back the stretch challenge of Include It.

"I'd have waited longer if I could have, but I wasn't sure how Royal Ruse was going and I needed to get to him at the second-last," the jockey said. "This is a hard stretch for horses to come to you. Horses can be close together at the end here, but if you're not right there at the last two fences it's hard to get there in time."

Blinkers and a full season of foxhunting with Elkridge-Harford helped Our Friend prep for the racing season and he responded – finishing second at the Piedmont Point-to-Point in March, winning at Elkridge-Harford April 6 and taking another step forward in the Manor to become a stakes winner.

TISA DELLA-VOLPE

"It's perseverance," said Joe Davies. "He had some bad races and a couple of bad falls. We hunted him all winter and didn't treat him so well. We had been babying him. This year we made him earn his keep. He hunted a lot, got put into some situations and I think it helped his jumping. With horses around him, he gets distracted – or we think he does – and that hurt him sometimes."

The Manor win was the second in four years for Armata, a long-standing partnership of Ben Griswold IV and Perry Bolton. Griswold won the race as a jockey aboard Doll Ram in 1957 and Malakasia in 1968.

The Undercard

Davies mentioned perseverance as a reason for the success of Our Friend, but patience and flexibility might be as important when it comes to owning steeplechase horses.

In 2021, trainer Todd McKenna called Bill Wylie about adding a horse to their Keystone Thoroughbreds stable. Hard Strike won his only start as a 2-year-old, going a mile on the turf for trainer Kenny McPeek, but couldn't quite break through again while dipping into the claiming ranks and

Early in the Manor, Salamanca School (left) shows the way over Our Friend, Road to Oz, Royal Ruse and Include It. Afterward, Joe Davies and Sophie O'Brien show off the winner.

The John Rush Streett Memorial timber gets crowded early as (from left) Hard Strike, Theda's Boy, Huyana and Stolen Shoes navigate a fence. Trainer Todd McKenna greets Andrew Burke Ott, as Jessica Lampe handles the winner, afterward.

changing barns. Hard Strike shared a sire, Hard Spun, with Grade 1 hurdler Snap Decision plus a handful of other jump winners, and fit the budget.

"I think we should claim this horse," McKenna said. "He's a Hard Spun. He's running for $16,000."

"The Hard Spuns are terrific for steeplechasing," Wyle replied. "Let's do it."

Hard Strike hit the entries at Kentucky Downs in September, and McKenna started to put the plan in motion. One problem.

"He was in for a $30,000 claiming price, and that's a little different," he said. "I had to call Bill back."

Wylie stayed game, flat trainer Paul McEntee dropped the slip, Hard Strike won with a wild late charge and started down the path of steeplechase horse. It went every which way at first.

"I was hoping to run him over hurdles as a 3-year-old and he just didn't take to it," McKenna said. "He had a bad experience schooling, and we couldn't get him over a jump for six months. We backed off, hunted him, not first flight, not second fight, third flight. It was mostly me fighting around with and not jumping much if anything."

He ran four times on the flat in 2022 and finally went jumping last fall as a timber horse. He pulled up at Shawan Downs, finished third at Middleburg and went off course at the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup.

This year went considerably better as Hard Strike started off by winning at the Warrenton Point-to-Point March 16, captured the maiden at Cheshire March 31 and added the $25,000 John Rush Streett Memorial allowance at the Manor. The 6-year-old relaxed early in third for jockey Andrew Burke Ott and found a rhythm behind Stolen Shoes (GB) and Huyana. As those two and Theda's Boy accelerated into the third-last, Hard Strike had 3 lengths to make up. He did it in an instant, clearing from behind those three after the final turn to take the lead over the second-last and win by 2½ lengths over Theda's Boy with Huyana third after 3 miles in 6:26.05.

McKenna paid credit with to his owner.

"Bill was so patient," McKenna said. "It would have been easy to get discouraged."

Wylie passed some credit back to his trainer for the developmental progress.

"He actually is a careful jumper now and it's been really fun to watch," said Wylie, also part of the Upland Partners ownership group. "We have a small group of people and we're all neighbors and friends. We hang out together and all feel the same way about our horses. It's been great fun."

■ McKenna, Burke Ott and Upland Partners – which includes Wylie, Mary MacKinnon and Sally Wood – teamed up to win the finale with Rhythmia. Worth $15,000, the John Schapiro Memorial allowance for apprentice jockeys drew four runners headed by stakes winners Vintage Vinnie (Ire) and Awesome Adrian.

Rhythmia, a half-brother to timber stakes horse Mystic Strike, actually cost $16,000 via the claim box after eight flat wins and won twice over timber last year. The 8-year-old

Top: Druid's Altar and Dan Nevin head to victory in a division of the Tom Voss maiden timber. Bottom: Rhythmia and Andrew Burke Ott show off their form in the John Schapiro.

Wagner (left) powers away from the crowd in a division of the Tom Voss Memorial maiden timber.

Florida-bred allowed Vintage Vinnie to set the pace until the third-last, then took over in the stretch and scored by 10 lengths in 6:18 for 3 miles. Vintage Vinnie held second over Awesome Adrian.

■ On the same day his star mare Adare Manor won the Apple Blossom Handicap-G1 at Oaklawn Park, owner Michael Lund Petersen won a division of the Tom Voss Memorial maiden timber with Druid's Altar (Ire). The Mastercraftsman (Ire) gelding raced in Petersen's Hyggelig Haven silks and handled six foes for trainer Willie Dowling and jockey Dan Nevin.

The win was the first in the United States for Druid's Altar, who won six times in Ireland on the flat, over hurdles and chase fences. Imported from trainer Joseph O'Brien in 2021, the now 7-year-old made his U.S. debut in the Foxbrook novice hurdle at Far Hills that October and finished fifth. He missed 2022 completely and came back last year for two timber starts, a pull-up and a second.

"We did a lot of schooling with him over the winter," said Dowling, who credited Rachael Lively's work in helping the horse with his jumping. "Having Dan Nevin here has helped a lot too. When you're a small outfit and you have a different jockey every time they run I think you're at a bit of a disadvantage. I told Dan that I wanted him to come in February so he'd be able to school the horses. I appreciated that and I think it's been good for him too. He's only ridden a few timber races.

"The horse is nice and I think he'll improve too. It's nice to get a winner early in the season and I'm happy for Michael because it's nice to have owners who support you like that."

■ Merriebelle Stable's Wagner (Ire) came into his American timber debut with plenty of promise – nine English wins under rules and in point-to-points will do that – but also a few questions based on a stated goal of the Maryland Hunt Cup and a quick switch to timber.

Class prevailed as Wagner and jockey Freddie Procter ran away from six others in the second division of the Voss Memorial. Rated early, Wagner figured out the unfamiliar fences, pulled alongside Don't Shout (Ire) at the last and scored by 2¾ lengths after 3 miles in 6:25. Don't Shout stayed for second with Island Nation (Ire) third.

Off two January point-to-point wins for Charlie Noell's Irish Merriebelle operation and trainer Max Comley, Wagner arrived in the Maryland barn of Blythe Miller Davies March 7 and was aimed for a U.S. debut at the Manor.

"I know what a Maryland timber horse looks like, and it's hard to say that he is or he isn't," said the trainer of the newcomer. "He was fit when he got here so he didn't need a point-to-point beforehand. I wanted to get him jumping well and know the difference between a chase fence there and a timber fence here. I wanted to explain the difference to him. We know he can jump, but it's different."

The dark bay by Mahler (an English-bred son of Galileo) handled the unfamiliar fences and everything else.

"He was pretty clever today, used his hind end and jumped off his hind end like a timber horse needs to do," she said. "I told Charlie Noell that it's prove to improve. He didn't have to win today; he just had to jump and show us he can jump bigger. He had to follow a different formula [than a normal timber horse] and it worked out." ■

The Steeplechase Times

Two at Three

SNAP DECISION JOINS UNCLE EDWIN AS ONLY THREE-TIME WINNERS OF IROQUOIS

By Sean Clancy ■ *Photographs by Tod Marks*

Ten lined up. 163-168 pounds. For $120,000. Amateur riders. The fences were natural hedges, well, more like cedar trees wedged in grass mounds, you could see the gaps. The ground was highway firm, dust flew up and hung in the air.

It was 1986.

Uncle Edwin and Census, both two-time winners, battled to become the first three-time winner of the 3-mile classic. So many had tried, so many had failed. Rockmayne won the first two and faded into a trivia question. Bluish went back-to-back in 1947-48. Jarrin John, the only 4-year-old to win it, then a second, a third and another win. The hard-trying mare Ginny Bug grabbed two in a row and a second the next year. Local Run, *Appollon, *Mabrouk, Hes Trouble, Owhata Chief (NZ). . . held at two.

And then that throwdown in the Tennessee sun. Uncle Edwin and Speedy Smithwick. Census and Charlie Fenwick. Both with two in the bank. They separated from Eremite and Charlie Brooks, Steve Canyon and George Sloan. Smithwick riding leg long, reins like fishing lines in a bass pond, cajoling another furlong from Martie Sanger's 9-year-old. Fenwick, foot jammed home, asking and receiving a big one at the last on the overachieving, white-faced Census.

Virginia-bred Uncle Edwin reeled in and then staved off Census by a neck to make history as first horse to win three editions of the Iroquois at Percy Warner Park in Nashville.

Since then, oh yeah, many have gotten close. The race turned to professionals. A watering system changed the course, then the hedges got ripped out and National Fences went in. The purse grew to $200,000 and still it's 3 miles, twice around the Belmont Park of steeplechase courses, twice up Heartbreak Hill, twice around for immortality. Victorian Hill, Mistico (Chi), Rowdy Irishman, Sur La Tete, Good Night Shirt, Tax Ruling went back-to-back and never again. Demonstrative and Scorpiancer (Ire) won two, a year in between for both and that was it.

And here the sport returned. One horse with a chance to join the podium.

Snap Decision won the Iroquois in 2021 and 2022. He was second to Scaramanga (Ire) in 2023. Graham Watters was aboard for the two wins, on the sidelines with a broken back last year.

The duo reunited for this year's Iroquois May 11. And they made Uncle Edwin move over.

Owned by Bruton Street US and trained by Jack Fisher, the 10-year-old son of Hard Spun tracked Vae Patron (Fr) throughout, collared the import with a gavel-slamming leap at the second-last fence, dug deep to and away from the last to wrestle a neck decision. Zabeel Champion (GB) rallied to be third after 5:32.4, the fastest time in 22 years.

Asked how this one compared to the others, Watters didn't hesitate.

"Three times better. Look, as you get older you know these things become more and more important," he said. "This was my first ever ride in a Grade 1 seven years ago. Little did I know, I'd be coming back to win it three times and there's one other horse to win it three times. Unbelievable stuff. He's a great horse to be a part of. He's American history. He's the best steeplechase horse, or one of the best steeplechase horses there ever was in America. He's an absolute hero."

Bred to be a flat horse in Kentucky by Phipps Stable, Snap Decision increased his steeplechase earnings to $959,400. With a win in the Grade 2 Temple Gwathmey at Middleburg in April and the Iroquois in May, Snap Decision climbed past Divine Fortune and Demonstrative and into fourth on the career earnings list. Three-time champion McDynamo, two-time champion Good Night Shirt and five-time champion Lonesome Glory stand at the top of that iconic list.

Snap Decision leads Vae Paton over the last fence enroute to his third victory in the Grade 1 Iroquois Stakes.

While his first two Iroquois wins were never in doubt, this one had a moment of concern when Vae Patron re-rallied before and after the last.

"I honestly thought it was Noah And The Ark (Ire) who was out the back all the way and was coming with a fresh set of legs," Watters said. "When I've seen it was Vae Patron, I knew Snap was keeping a bit to himself. I pumped him to the last, he came up outside the wings, I said, 'You've got loads left,' I got two thumps into him, and he sprinted up away from him."

Watters joined Fisher's barn in 2021, picking up the ride on Snap Decision after a Covid-ravaged season in 2020. On a seven-race win streak, Snap Decision added the Grade 2 Temple Gwathmey and the Iroquois (run in late June) in 2021. In 2022, they snapped a three-race losing streak in the Iroquois. This year, they notched their fourth Grade 1 stakes win together. In all, Snap Decision owns 15 wins (13 stakes) from 25 starts over hurdles. He's missed two checks, both on soft ground at Far Hills. He won his first two starts of 2024 to reach $165,000 in earnings this year, $66,000 more than second-place Rampoldi Plan through May 17.

"I'll never come across him again. No one will. He's a once-in-a-lifetime horse. I hope I do, but you'd be struggling," Watters said. "His enthusiasm. Not that I get nervous or jockeys get nervous going to the races, but I had serious butterflies today. It's not like going out riding a no-hoper and there's no pressure. I've won it twice before and there's a lot of pressure. I'm a bit nervous getting on him but as soon as I get a leg over him, he's got his head in the air, his ears pricked and it all goes away because it's just you and me."

And Uncle Edwin.

Abaan leads over the last in the Green Pastures novice hurdle stakes, his fourth win in a row.

Abaan continues climb

Nine nominations. Six entries. One early scratch. Two late scratches. Three runners. Two trainers.

That was the numbers game of the Green Pastures novice hurdle stakes at the Iroquois Steeplechase May 11.

"I don't like it," Kate Dalton said back at the barn before the $75,000 race.

Afterward. . . "I'm pretty happy," the trainer said.

Abaan avoided a trap and dominated the co-feature by 2¾ lengths over the Leslie Young-trained High Definition (Ire) and Total Joy (Ire). A Grade 3 winner on the flat, Abaan improved his hurdle career to four wins from five starts, including three consecutive novice stakes for Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Daigneault Thoroughbreds.

Bernie Dalton settled Abaan, neck bowed, head low, off the pace set by Total Joy and Group 1-placed High Definition.

"The one nice thing is Abaan would trot to the first fence, he's not keen at all in a race, he just settles in there and waits," Kate Dalton said. "If they were playing the 'nobody-wants-to-go' game, I'm pretty sure we'd win that."

Abaan pulled closer to the pace down the hill after the wire the first time, relented and switched back to third before reengaging three wide down the backside the final time. High Definition led over the second-last, but Dalton hadn't budged on Abaan. The son of Will Take Charge rolled to the lead, flew the last and won with two pats and a point to the crowd from his jockey.

Originally with Shadwell Stable and trainer Dan Peitz, Abaan was purchased by his prominent flat owners and switched to Hall of Famer Todd Pletcher in 2021. There, he won four races, including the H. Allen Jerkens at 2 miles and the Grade 3 William L. McKnight at 1½ miles. On a seven-race losing streak last spring, Abaan switched to steeplechasing and has enjoyed a revitalization.

"He's a really cool horse. He's obviously talented. I think he's a typical flat horse, as long as he thinks this is fun, he's going to be really good. I'm not sure what will happen if it ever gets like work for him," Kate Dalton said. "When you watch him go around there, you're like, 'wow.' He's so fluid. He has that good-horse presence that Snap Decision has, and Demonstrative. Just those big horses that you looked at and knew were good. He has that."

Jumping Around

As usual, the spring season was a blur – racing from Aiken, S.C., in March to Radnor, Pa., in May before the schedule shifted to Saratoga and Colonial Downs racetracks. Snap Decision, Rampoldi Plan and Abaan (who opened with a Carolina Cup score) stole most of the attention along with the traditional Maryland timber stops (see related articles), but they weren't alone . . . The Young barn put up 21 wins, a cushion of 10 on Jack Fisher through May . . . The Fisher-trained Schoodic won the Virginia Gold Cup timber stakes at age 14, running his winning streak to four. Now owned by the trainer's parents John and Dolly, the Tiznow gelding bred by Edith R. Dixon raced on the flat as a 2-year-old – in 2012 – and won for the 17th time in 49 starts over jumps. He won the 2021 Virginia Gold Cup and in 10 starts at Great Meadow has won five and hit the board in three others, all stakes. . . Grade 1 jumpers get another chance in the first running of the Beverly Steinman Stakes during the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival at Saratoga June 9. . . Summer stops include Colonial Downs and Saratoga in July, August and September. ■

The Steeplechase Times

Locals First

LEIPERS FORK OWNERS ENJOY RIDE WITH STRING OF WINNERS

By Joe Clancy ■ *Photographs by Tod Marks*

Like good Nashville-area residents with even a remote connection to horses, brothers-in-law Mark McMillan and Mark George attend the Iroquois Steeplechase with their friends and families. They get dressed up, pack picnics, cheer for their favorites, catch up with neighbors and otherwise enjoy a day out – all to benefit the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt University.

A few years ago, and nobody's sure who said it first, they asked each other a question. "Why don't we have a horse?"

Finding no good reason, the Marks started Leipers Fork Steeplechasers, named for a community (population 650) southwest of the city. The blue and green silks made their debut in 2019. Three horses made eight starts, none at the Iroquois, and won zero races. The next year brought two wins, but no local tries. Three Iroquois runners arrived in 2021; one finished second. The 2022 slate went all the way to 11 wins, including a score by Fast Vision (Fr) on the home track. Last year included eight wins, but a goose egg at the Iroquois – annually the richest stop on the National Steeplechase Association's spring calendar.

Looking ahead, George came up with the term "Operation Nashville," for 2024. Consider it complete.

"It's Nashville and we all live nearby," said McMillan. "The focus was to try to get as many horses as we could to Nashville, and we also knew we had to get as many nice horses as we could to Nashville because Nashville is the toughest meet. Everybody wants to win here, no matter where they live."

Trainer Leslie Young sent seven Leipers Forkers to the Iroquois May 11. They put up two wins, four seconds and a fourth.

"It was a great day," said McMillan. "It just kind of worked out. How could you do any better? You have to be happy with that. You know how it is, we got lucky. We got nice horses to Nashville and we had some luck. We've got a bunch of really nice horses this year. If we got one win at Nashville we would have been delighted."

Maidens Old Tom Morris (Ire) and Ready To Wear (Ire) picked up the victories in $40,000 races, and former top-class flat horse High Definition (Ire) finished second in the $75,000 Green Pastures novice stakes to hint at big futures. The best performance may have been another runner-up effort as Vae Patron (Fr) finished second by a neck to Snap Decision in the $200,000 Iroquois-G1 as the favorite became the race's second three-time winner in a history dating to 1941.

"Snap Decision deserved to win," said McMillan. "I think we got even with him between the last fence and the wire, and he just dug in. Both horses dug in really. It was a proper race. If you're going to get beaten, get beaten by that horse. Snap Decision is a one of a kind, historic, classic horse. When you hit the giants like Snap Decision, it's a little bit disappointing not to win but you're happy to go up against a horse like that and we were really proud of our horse."

McMillan paid credit to Young and her team for the work involved to purchase and prep the squad for Iroquois and beyond in 2024, which included a string of highlights beyond Tennessee. Leipers Fork won a Grade 1 at the Virginia Gold Cup meet with Rampoldi Plan, and through the spring season (which ended May 18) led all owners with eight wins and $315,200 from 21 starts on the NSA circuit.

Irish-bred winners of the split maiden hurdle at Iroquois for Leipers Fork Steeplechasers: Ready To Wear (left) in the paddock before his second sanctioned start, and Old Tom Morris, galloping home in his debut.

"Leslie finds nice horses and we're fortunate enough to trust her and we win races," said McMillan. "We've tried to step up and we have. We seem to be able to set goals and she can get the horses there. She and her staff have a lot of ability and it's working well for us. She's done a great job for us."

Rampoldi Plan gave Leipers Fork its first Grade 1 win with a 2½-length score in the $150,000 Commonwealth Cup at the Virginia Gold Cup May 4. The winner stalked leader West Newton (GB) early, took over on the final turn and flew home, keeping Welshman and L'Imperator (Fr) safe late in the 2⅛-mile stakes. Bred in Florida by Hardacre Farm, Rampoldi Plan took a roundabout route to American jump racing including an $18,000 sale at Keeneland September as a yearling in 2020 and a $129,953 sale as a 2-year-old at England's Tattersalls the next year.

After nine losses on the flat with trainer Alan King in England through August 2022, the son of Hard Spun joined Young's barn as a hurdle prospect and made his jump debut in April 2023. He won once in four starts and opened 2024 with a second to stablemate High Definition at Middleburg April 20.

The chestnut stepped forward in the Commonwealth.

"I rode him once last year and he lost both front shoes at the first fence," said winning jockey Jamie Bargary. "We finished fifth and he gave me no feel but that wasn't his fault. This time, the ground was a little softer and he loved it. He traveled and jumped. I was impressed with how much distance he put between himself and the horses behind him. He put the race to bed."

The win highlighted a strong spring for Bargary, who had nine wins to tie 2023 champion Graham Watters at the top of the standings.

"He was my first Grade 1 winner," Bargary said. "It's a real sense of relief when you finally get it. It's my 10th season as a professional. You start to think, 'What more do you have to do to get the big one?' People can't take that away from you. You'll always be a Grade 1-winning jockey."

Bargary rode his first American races in 2021 and came up with seven wins. He pushed it to 14 in 2022 and won nine (from 83 mounts) last year. With a five-year visa secured and a move to Young's barn, the 30-year-old Irishman matched last year's win total from just 42 mounts.

"I've been riding with plenty of confidence knowing I'm in with a shout to at least ride a winner every weekend," he said. "When you get on a horse, you block everything out and ride. You can't pick them up and carry them, but it helps to be confident, to know you're making good decisions and doing well. That helps you keep doing it well." ■

RETIRED RACEHORSE PROJECT

The Other Half of Aftercare

THOROUGHBREDS TAKE MANY PATHS TO SECOND CAREERS

By Kristen Kovatch Bentley

ZENYA LEPPER

Editor's Note: *This month,* Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred *and the Retired Racehorse Project launch a periodic feature about Thoroughbred aftercare. Subjects will include strategies for owners and trainers, profiles of organizations, people and horses and topics that matter to anyone breeding, raising, racing or caring for Thoroughbreds. For more, see therrp.org.*

Aftercare. It's a Thoroughbred industry buzzword, the subject of op-eds and podcast chats, a go-to topic for panel discussions and keynote addresses, riddled with paradoxes. It is, simultaneously, one of the industry's biggest feel-good stories and one of its continuing conundrums, a puzzle to be solved to ensure that every horse has a future beyond racing. It is, simultaneously, the responsibility of all who touch a horse throughout its lifetime, and the work of charitable organizations.

Or is it?

While the accredited model for non-profit organizations may be the most highly visible aspect of Thoroughbred aftercare, the reality is that it's simply one part of a bigger patchwork of unaccredited non-profit organizations, in-house programs, private individuals and businesses, as well as incentive and advocacy organizations. These facets of the aftercare industry often fly under the radar of national or international recognition, working efficiently and effectively to move horses into new homes and develop opportunities and increase demand for these horses in the first place.

The Players

The Retired Racehorse Project, in a position to interface with branches of the aftercare industry through its work to increase demand for Thoroughbreds beyond racing, identifies the following facets of aftercare:

Adoption organizations: These non-profits rehome horses donated or surrendered to their programs. Depending on the scope of the individual organization, horses may be rehabilitated from injury; they may also be lightly restarted for a riding career beyond racing. Adoption organizations may be eligible for accreditation from other organizations depending on their structure; others operate outside of the accreditation model. Non-profits usually charge a nominal adoption fee and typically require an application and adoption contract.

Resellers: The industry-adopted term for individuals who purchase horses directly from racing connections, resellers assess, rehabilitate and retrain horses for sale to new owners pursuing competitive or recreational outlets with Thoroughbreds. As business entities, resellers generally operate outside of the umbrella of accredited aftercare. They price horses based on market demand; buyer vetting and contracts vary business to business.

In-house aftercare: In-house programs are developed and funded by owners or breeders to directly facilitate second careers through sale, adoption or long-term/lifetime lease. Some in-house programs also include permanent

One challenge with measuring the impact of these various branches of Thoroughbred aftercare is the lack of publicly available data. No single organization or entity tracks, in a comprehensive way, the horses retiring from racing annually, nor the channels through which they are moving.

sanctuary on-farm for their own horses. In-house aftercare can also refer to connections who have a direct relationship with interested equestrians, but don't necessarily have a formal program.

Listing services: Listing services may operate either as non-profits or individually as businesses. Both operating models serve the same purpose: to connect racing connections with interested buyers directly through online or social media listings. These services are provided either for free or a nominal cost by volunteers and organizations, or on a commission-based system by business entities.

Sanctuary organizations: Sanctuaries are equine facilities that provide lifetime care for horses, and don't typically offer horses for adoption. Sanctuaries may provide rehabilitative care for horses retiring with injury. These organizations may be eligible for accreditation from other organizations depending on their structure; private sanctuaries also exist outside of the non-profit realm. Some sanctuaries may also include therapeutic, training or equine-assisted programs.

Track-based programs: These programs originate through and are funded by regional racing jurisdictions, industry groups, or track-operating entities to help facilitate the placement of Thoroughbreds retiring from racing, utilizing a network of regional programs and farms to aid in the transition. They may work with other non-profits, as well as private farms and trainers. Generally, these programs do not fit the criteria for accreditation, but may choose to work exclusively with accredited organizations.

Incentive programs: Incentive, advocacy and education organizations offer a range of services, including competition venues for retired racehorses, education for both the racing and equestrian industries, and incentives to encourage more equestrians to partner with Thoroughbreds. The work of these organizations creates demand for the breed in second careers.

Industry Data

One challenge with measuring the impact of these various branches of Thoroughbred aftercare is the lack of publicly available data. No single organization or entity tracks, in a comprehensive way, the horses retiring from racing annually, nor the channels through which they are moving. Racing fans might catch the odd headline about a high-profile gelding and their plans in retirement, but the average racehorse moves quietly into life beyond racing with little to no reporting.

However, looking at participant-reported data for the Retired Racehorse Project's Thoroughbred Makeover, the annual retraining competition for horses in their first year of transition post-racing, gives a few insights as to how horses sourced for the Makeover move into second careers.

Horses sourced directly from racing connections: This figure includes horses sourced via listing agents, in-house programs, direct connections and end-of-meet sales. Since 2019, this figure has been on a slight decline, from 59 percent of all Makeover entries in 2019 to 50 percent in 2023.

Horses sourced from resellers (defined as intermediary individuals or businesses who take ownership of horses with the intent to resell): This figure has been on the rise as more individuals find a niche in the aftercare industry, from 18 percent of all Makeover entries in 2019 to about 28 percent in 2023.

Horses sourced from non-profit aftercare facilities: This classification includes accredited and non-accredited non-profit organizations and has fallen slightly since 2019. About 21 percent of Makeover entries in 2019 came through non-profit organizations, dipping to 17 percent in 2022 and back up slightly to 19 percent in 2023.

Of note, about 1 percent of all Makeover entries each year are sourced from livestock or general horse auctions and "kill pen" sales.

Thoroughbred Makeover entries, of course, represent just a small portion of the estimated thousands of horses retiring from the racetrack each year, and the Makeover population is comprised of horses who are more or less ready to move directly into new careers. This population likely underrepre-

SARAH SCHAAF

CAPTIVATION PHOTOGRAPHY

ZENYA LEPPER

Thoroughbred Makeover entries such as (from left) Knockemdown, Take a Peak and Ninetynine Excuses – plus Maryland Pride from previous pages – compete in a variety of disciplines, but represent a small portion of horses retiring from the racetrack each year.

sents horses in need of more time from retirement to a new career, and the channels through which they're traveling.

However, the data the Thoroughbred Makeover collects is one of the few touchpoints the aftercare industry has with the routes horses take to second careers. The Retired Racehorse Project's whole-industry approach to Thoroughbred aftercare places the organization in a unique position to collect this data and serve the branches of this critical movement.

No matter how horses are moving from racing to retirement, one conclusion is clear: no single branch of aftercare can serve as a single solution. There's a broad spectrum of needs to be served when transitioning horses, defined not only by the needs of the horse but also the connections facilitating retirement. For the aftercare industry to continue to operate efficiently and effectively to serve those horses and connections, all branches need to work together collaboratively to share the load and the burden of transition.

How to Help

Much in the way that effective aftercare includes multiple entities and routes to careers beyond racing, the ways to support aftercare vary. Non-profits, including the accrediting bodies, always need direct donations and sponsorship, beyond the takeout programs and sales opt-ins. For organizations, business and individuals who operate outside the non-profit model, support can be more tricky.

One of the best ways to support the aftercare industry in any form is to develop an aftercare plan for your horses, whether you're a breeder or an owner (or both). An aftercare plan can be as detailed as building your own in-house program and facility, or as simple as setting aside funds to support your horse through initial transition to a career beyond racing. Should your horse retire in need of rehabilitation from an injury, those funds can make a big difference and remove the burden of cost from the individual or organization transitioning that horse to his next chapter.

Whether you route your horses through an in-house program, a non-profit organization, or the open market will depend on the needs of your particular horses as well as your needs as an individual or business and how quickly a horse needs to move off of your bills. Thoroughbred Aftercare Association-accredited or Thoroughbred Charities of America grant recipients are generally well-suited to finish rehabilitation from injury; a reseller or listing agent may be able to sell your horse retiring sound for a higher value if you need to make a return on your original investment.

Track-based or racing jurisdiction-based programs were created to help horsemen navigate the wide world of aftercare: Maryland's Beyond the Wire and Pennsylvania's Turning For Home are great examples in the Mid-Atlantic region that network with partner farms and organizations to take the guesswork out of placing horses upon retirement.

Advocacy programs, such as the Retired Racehorse Project, and programs such as the Thoroughbred Incentive Program or TAKE2, drive demand for Thoroughbreds in careers beyond racing, which in turn makes the work of adoption organizations, listing agents and resellers faster and easier.

Thoroughbred aftercare is not the work of one single organization or branch of the industry: it's a wide-ranging effort that takes the collaboration and cooperation of multiple entities. It's critical for the Thoroughbred industry to recognize the impact of all of these parts of aftercare that contribute to this important system. ■

Kristen Kovatch Bentley is the communications manager for the Retired Racehorse Project.

— Loose Rein —

BY VINNIE PERRONE

Trail Blazer

RAINES CRAFTED UNPARALLELED RACING LIFE FROM SCRATCH

It happened near dusk, summertime, 1913. Or was it 1915? Through long shadows a smiling phantom approached a boy on an Oklahoma ranch-house veranda, asked for his pappy, stayed for supper.

Mr. Landgrieve, as they called the stranger, had known farmer Raines as an able horse trader, but he'd come for something else: a stablehand to groom and develop. Ross Raines took stock of hard times, surveyed his 12 kids around the big oak table, showed a crooked finger and spoke two words that would steer the fate of Thoroughbred racing.

"Take Buddy."

Virgil "Buddy" Raines said he was 4 when his dad and Mr. Landgrieve worked their handshake deal. Whether Landgrieve gave up anything in return, Buddy couldn't say. They left Muskogee for Missouri the next day.

"Thank goodness he picked me," Buddy said in 1994, when he was a spry 85. Or would that be 83?

Buddy had changed hands free of paperwork, leaving him unsure of his day (March 30 or April 1) and year (1909 or 1911) of birth. "I think I was born in Illinois," he said.

Landgrieve groomed and developed Buddy but didn't keep him. In need of a horse, he traded his 12-year-old acquisition to a Mr. Dayton, who in turn sold the boy to Thoroughbred trainer R.A. "Whistling Bob" Smith for $300.

Along the dusty Midwest wagon trails, horse traders tracked north in summer, south in winter, anyplace in between. Whistling Bob Smith, nicknamed for his genial demeanor, set roots in Maryland.

There came a stumble at the start: Enlisting Buddy to unload groceries one afternoon, Mrs. Smith asked for a box of salt and got sugar, asked for yeast and got flour. "Can't you see what that says there?" she asked Buddy. "No," he told her, masking his inability to read. "I can't see that." Mrs. Smith ran out to the barn, cornered her husband and shouted, "You dumbbell, you just bought a blind jock!"

Truth disclosed, Mrs. Smith enrolled Buddy in first grade at a Laurel, Md., elementary school when he was 13 (or would that be 11?), conspicuousness flaring on days Whistling Bob gave Buddy his Cadillac to drive to class. Buddy discovered how to read and write some until a bicyclist struck and killed Mrs. Smith a year later, and school learning ceased.

In 1928, Whistling Bob offered Buddy a three-year contract as apprentice rider at $45 a month, room and board thrown in. Buddy signed it Virgil W. Raines in sketchy cursive.

"I never did like to ride," he said plainly. "Everybody squawked all the time. Always the guy that gets blamed is the rider. And I never liked to persevere as much as they have to." Horses took him place to place, but training moved him.

Whistling Bob, a child runaway who'd supported himself by selling newspapers, then managed a champion lightweight boxer before landing work with August Belmont I, understood Buddy and later accommodated him. Buddy could become assistant trainer, the offer carried, if he'd double as exercise rider. Buddy accepted.

They grew together. Whistling Bob's stable had so broadened in size and talent that he moved to Belmont Park and in 1932 bought two yearlings that would become national sensations for Isabel Dodge Sloane's Brookmeade Stable. The $1,200 purchase, Cavalcade, won the 1934 Kentucky Derby; the $3,500 purchase, High Quest, the '34 Preakness (beating Cavalcade) and Wood Memorial. Buddy Raines guided morning work for both and had more than a bit part in Cavalcade's progress as Smith led the nation's trainers in earnings a second straight year.

Buddy recalled fondly 1934 for another reason, and 60 years later hiked his khakis to sport the evidence: calf-high

KRISTEN BARTH / MARYLAND HORSE LIBRARY

Trainer Buddy Raines is remembered each year by Monmouth Park with an award in his name.

brown leather boots, worn away on one side from hours in the saddle. See, he'd known this bootmaker in Kansas. "I give him a filly one time and she turned out a good filly for him," Buddy said in prairie twang. "He made 'em and sent 'em to me. I've had 'em retreaded a couple times."

Unaffected by the late-November chill of a Laurel Park morning, between a summer at Monmouth Park and a winter home in South Carolina, Buddy fussed with the safety vest the track had newly required of riders. For a guy who'd jockeyed at length without a helmet, it proved an odd fit.

"Good place to keep my stopwatch," he offered. "That's about the best thing I can say for it."

In his mid-80s, he planted his right sole on an inverted green bucket, left to the stirrup and hoisted himself upon Doc the pony without a grunt. Doc's leather breastplate once belonged to riding wiz George "Iceman" Woolf, Buddy said. After Woolf died from a spill in 1946, his widow gave Buddy the silver-inlaid tack as a memento.

His Western saddle too had a story. A guy was broke. Buddy, then 18 – or was it 16? – gave him $50 for it in 1927.

> "In any other game, I'd be a pick-and-ax man, hammer-and-saw, whatever you call it. I got to see a lot more than I ever would have seen in any other way."
>
> *– Buddy Raines, about his life in racing*

He could probably fetch $400 for it, he said in '94, if he were fool enough to try.

Other treasures he couldn't hold. On a highway drive to the Kent Manor Inn on Maryland's Eastern Shore one night in the 1940s, Buddy's first wife mistook a door handle for a window crank and worked the lever. Her rear door of the Chrysler opened into the wind; she was sucked onto the roadway and died that night.

With his second wife he had two daughters, one the mother of jockeys John Luzzi Jr. and Mike Luzzi. But she seemed to tire of the travel, Buddy said, and the notion that horses come first. He found "a dandy" in third wife Betty Hill Raines, who understood her husband's view that "the best thing for the inside of a man is the outside of a horse."

Fulfillment spanned the decades. With Whistling Bob Smith's retirement in 1937, Buddy assumed training for Brookmeade and other clients, Delaware Park co-founder Donald P. Ross among them. In 1950, Ross' Brandywine Stable took the Dwyer Stakes and Arlington Classic with Greek Song and a year later retired multiple stakes winner Cochise after an 18-for-56, $257,985 career for Raines.

In time, a Ross-bred son of Greek Song found Buddy's barn and quickly caused a stir. Virginia-bred Greek Money, Buddy said, took after his mother, *Lucy Lufton, sired by English-bred Nimbus from the famed Nearco line: a skittish, excitable, temperamental stall-walker.

The Brandywine colt seemed Triple Crown-worthy off a stakes win at 2, but Greek Money's fretting made Buddy fret. While the bulk of the stable went to New Orleans, Buddy left the horse at Brandywine's base next to Delaware Park for the winter. A donkey provided turnout company, an indoor track a place to exercise. In March, Greek Money moved to Laurel. He ran twice there in April, skipped the '62 Kentucky Derby for all its hoo-ha and won the $5,000 Preakness Prep the week before the big one.

The 11-horse Preakness field had Derby winner Decidedly and blue-blooded hotshots Jaipur and Ridan, co-favored at 5-2. Greek Money flashed double-digit odds that sweltering afternoon when Buddy greeted jockey Rotz, one-time Illinois farm boy, and kept instructions short: "Johnny, go out and ride him as if you owned him."

Long before Codex harried Genuine Risk and Forty Niner harried Winning Colors, the 1962 Preakness served a harum-scarum stretch run between Ridan and Greek Money. Seasoned *Baltimore Sun* photographer Joe DiPaola Jr., seeking a different shooting angle, snapped the iconic head-on shot of the dueling frontrunners, Ridan jockey Manny Ycaza's left elbow blatantly extended toward Greek Money and Rotz. Greek Money won the Preakness by a long nose and withstood a foul claim by Ycaza, the apparent offender.

While the turf writers went batty over "the fighting finish," the winning connections brushed it off. Buddy praised Rotz's ground-saving tack and late-race resolve. Rotz downplayed the contact and praised Buddy for having Greek Money primed. The Pimlico stewards eventually suspended Ycaza 10 days for "unfair tactics" and a frivolous foul claim.

"They say 'seein' is believin', " Buddy said, the scrappy stretch run 32 years done. "But you can't always believe what you see."

After Greek Money gave Buddy his timeless score, half-sister Open Fire (by Cochise) became a race mare of national prominence. In 1966, she won the country's older female championship with wins in the Delaware Handicap, Keeneland's Spinster and Saratoga's Diana.

Decades later, for owner-breeder Anderson Fowler, Buddy developed Maryland-bred dynamos Master Speaker (winner of the Grade 2 Paterson Handicap at the Meadowlands) and Timely Warning (Grade 1 Brooklyn Handicap at Aqueduct). Master Speaker, a son of Master Willie (GB), won the Maryland Million Classic in 1989. His stablemate, by Caveat, ruled the same race in 1990 and 1991. And finished second, by a head, in 1992. Combined, they won 25 races and earned $1,506,150. See the U. S. A. – out of Greek Money's half-sister Even Out – started 96 times for Raines, at first for breeder Brandywine and later with Betty Raines as the owner, winning 23.

Thirty years ago at Laurel, Raines dismounted Doc more carefully than he'd gotten on, adjusted his signature white Stetson and said, "I don't know how much longer I'm gonna make it, but I'm gonna wear out; I ain't gonna rust out."

JOE DIPAOLA JR.

NEENA EWING COLLECTION / MARYLAND HORSE LIBRARY

CAPPY JACKSON COLLECTION / MARYLAND HORSE LIBRARY

Greek Money (right) and Ridan battle in the 1962 Preakness; Master Speaker (above, right) heads to victory; Timely Warning gets ready for a Maryland Million start.

Buddy patted Doc's brown neck with a grateful hand. "The longer I'm in it, the more I like it," he said. "You learn somethin' new every day. When you quit learnin' is when you quit livin'."

Buddy stopped learning May 11, 2000 – so noted the obituaries that claimed his birthdate as March 30, 1911. He was 89, maybe 91. But his achievements mustered no guesswork.

Six times Raines was a finalist for a spot alongside Smith in racing's national Hall of Fame. No induction came then, nor in subsequent glances by the Historic Review Committee.

In 2008, Delaware Park put Raines on its Wall of Fame. Monmouth Park, in a nod to Raines' decades at the New Jersey track, created the Virgil W. Raines Distinguished Achievement Award in 1996. The annual prize honors an owner or trainer competing at the track for dedication to the sport "through exemplary conduct demonstrating professionalism and integrity." Recipients include trainers J. Willard Thompson, Danny Perlsweig, Jimmy Croll, John Forbes, Ben Perkins Sr., Tim Hills and Patrick McBurney. The 2023 honor went to New Jersey owner/breeder John Bowers Jr.

Such accolades and remembrances seemed a distant notion that day at Laurel in 1994. Instead, Buddy marveled at the golden life he'd lived because a needy stranger had been obliged.

"In any other game, I'd be a pick-and-ax man, hammer-and-saw, whatever you call it," he said. "I got to see a lot more than I ever would have seen in any other way."

Here and abroad, he'd befriended millionaires, actors, politicians, artists, noblemen. A rootless life of grand adventure, Buddy reckoned, had ways of teaching too.

Everywhere he looked, he found things to read – morning grass stiff and crunchy underfoot; breaths expelled as vapor trails; equine coats made thick by winter's trace. Language he knew and heeded. It pointed him home to Aiken, S.C., to renew himself and replenish stock, to journey north again when the earth turned green. ■

Former Washington Post *racing writer Vinnie Perrone's Loose Rein will appear periodically in Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred.*

— Trackside: Charles Town —

All in the Family

OVERNIGHT POW WOW CONTINUES LEGACY OF SUCCESS

By John Piassek

The 2013 Keeneland January sale featured a slew of splashy purchases. A yearling Street Sense filly out of Please Sign In topped the sale at $1.45 million. She ultimately didn't race and did not produce a winner as a broodmare, but the highest-priced broodmare of the sale, Nereid at $1.3 million, has since produced five winners, including stakes winner Figarella's Queen. Stonestreet Stables purchased three stakes-winning broodmares: Potesta, Salty Strike and Supreme, for $800,000 each. The strategy proved productive, as Supreme went on to produce Grade 1 winner Silver State, while Salty Strike is the dam of two-time champion Goodnight Olive.

But one of the most productive buys of the sale made little splash at the time; the equivalent of dropping a pebble into the Atlantic Ocean.

Cyndy McKee's $5,000 purchase of the Indian Charlie mare Holy Pow Wow, who lost her four starts on the track, may have gone largely unnoticed, but she's since gone on to a broodmare career to rival even those Stonestreet purchases at Beau Ridge Farm in Kearneysville, W.Va., operated by Cyndy and her late husband, John.

Holy Pow Wow has been bred exclusively to Beau Ridge stallion Fiber Sonde. "Indian Charlie mares cross well with Fiber Sonde," said McKee. "We bought her for Fiber Sonde."

Fiber Sonde and Holy Pow Wow go together like peanut butter and jelly.

Holy Pow Wow's second foal, Late Night Pow Wow, won seven stakes in her 15-start career, including the 2018 Charles Town Oaks-G3 and the 2019 Barbara Fritchie-G3, and was Grade 1-placed. Her next foal, Muad'dib, is a 16-time winner, including back-to-back scores in the Sam Huff West Virginia Breeders Classic in 2021 and 2022, and is closing in on $1 million in career earnings.

A third sibling, Overnight Pow Wow, has begun to make her mark on the track. The 3-year-old filly has won two of her first three starts, including the April 27 Its Binn too Long Stakes at Charles Town, with McKee as owner and trainer.

It's another brush in the tack trunk for McKee, who, in addition to owning Beau Ridge, is the president of the West Virginia Thoroughbred Breeders Association.

Holy Pow Wow, a big, rawboned mare checking in at more than 16 hands, is the star of the Beau Ridge broodmare band. "She kind of rules the roost out here. Whatever she wants, she gets, even if she doesn't need it."

While her size gives her an intimidating presence, Holy Pow Wow also possesses a docile, kind demeanor. "She's a big ol' kind mare. A guy who works for me has three boys that are around the farm a lot, and they like to take her out and bring her in. She's a real good girl."

Cyndy and John sold Holy Pow Wow's previous offspring privately. Late Night Pow Wow raced for Breeze Easy and trainer Javier Contreras, while Muad'dib is campaigned by David Raim in the Jeff Runco barn. Cyndy managed to convince John to hold on to Overnight Pow Wow, citing a desire to keep a filly from the family, but it wasn't easy.

"I always wanted to keep one of them, and it seemed like we always had to sell our better horses, but we got to a position where we didn't have to sell them," she said. "When that filly was born, I made up my mind that I wanted to keep her. John and I went round and round on it, we hemmed and hawed, but that was a battle I won."

COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Overnight Pow Wow gears down late while winning the Its Binn too Long Stakes for 3-year-old fillies in her stakes debut.

It cost Cyndy $40,000 – half of what John had sold Late Night Pow Wow and Muad'dib for – but she held on to Overnight Pow Wow and began to prepare her for a racing career.

Despite her affection for the filly, McKee knew the best way to get the most out of her and continue Holy Pow Wow's legacy was to treat her like any other racehorse. "I had her at Rood and Riddle at one time, just going over her before I was going to put the screws to her," said McKee. "The vet said the biggest problem with that filly was me, because I wouldn't let her grow up and be a racehorse. I basically needed to train her like the average horse, go ahead and run her, and I complied."

A hock injury cost Overnight Pow Wow her freshman campaign. "She came back from the track one day, laid down and rolled, and nicked, and I mean just barely nicked, the inside of her hock," said McKee. "Next day, it was all blown up."

A trip to Spurlock Equine Associates in Lovettsville, Va., confirmed the injury, but also showed that the damage was not inside the joint.

While Overnight Pow Wow managed to avoid a serious injury, she still required a rehabilitation stint before she could return to the track. "She had to have antibiotics four times a day for eight days, had to walk on the Eurociser twice a day. I took her home, did all that with her, and then brought her back."

By the end of January and almost a year since John McKee died at age 83, Overnight Pow Wow was ready for her debut, but a sloppy track and a minor illness necessitated a scratch. She reappeared in the entries for a 4½-furlong West

"I do really feel she'll be better going longer. My biggest goal, and this is just a pipe dream, is the Charles Town Oaks. If I could get a graded-stakes placing with her on her home track, that would be like Christmas every day."

– Owner/trainer Cyndy McKee, about Overnight Pow Wow's future

Virginia-bred maiden special weight Feb. 14, and rewarded McKee's patience with a 4-length win under jockey Reshawn Latchman. She was second next out, a first-level allowance March 16, behind Jlodiamond – a loss Cyndy takes the blame for. "It was my fault she got beat. I ran a horse that wasn't quite fit, I hadn't really set her down and made her do some stuff."

Careful not to make the same mistake, McKee gave her a pair of bullet workouts between the allowance effort and the Its Binn too Long, including a half-mile from the gate in :46.60 April 18. That time was two seconds faster than she had worked the same distance March 11, her final workout prior to her debut against winners.

"I told Latchman, don't whip and drive her, just let her work, let her be a horse," said McKee of her workout plan.

The strategy proved to be successful. Sent off as the 6-1 fourth choice in the eight-horse field, she pressed the pace in the three path under Latchman, then struck the front in the stretch and pulled clear late, defeating Jlodiamond by 1¾ lengths. The win avenged Late Night Pow Wow's second in the 2018 race, and made McKee even more hopeful of the filly's future. She plans to keep her in stakes company in West Virginia, with one of the crown jewels of the racing schedule a prime target.

"I do really feel she'll be better going longer," said McKee. "My biggest goal, and this is just a pipe dream, is the Charles Town Oaks. If I could get a graded-stakes placing with her on her home track, that would be like Christmas every day."

The $750,000 Oaks, a Grade 2 this year, is Aug. 23, and the Fiber Sonde-Holy Pow Wow combination includes a yearling colt, I'm J.D. The mare did not have a foal this year, but is expecting for 2025.

NOTES: Charles Town hosted its first stakes of the year, the Original Gold for West Virginia-bred fillies and mares, April 13. **Lightnin Runner** won for owner George Nyren, trainer Ronney Brown, who bred the filly with his wife Nicole Brown, and jockey Carlos Lopez. She's now a stakes winner at ages 2, 3 and 4, following victories in the 2022 Rachel's Turn and last year's Its Binn too Long. Brown owned and trained the race's namesake, who won the Cavada on West Virginia Breeders Classics night in 2004 and 2005 . . . Muad'dib was the odds-on choice in the April 20 Confucius Say, but settled for third as **Espresso** pulled the 25-1 upset in his stakes debut. Setting every fraction, Espresso held off Social Chic late to win by a neck. The Gary Hemp homebred son of Juba is trained by Keith Brown and was ridden by Victor Rodriguez . . . **Arnaldo Bocachica** held a commanding lead in the jockeys' standings as of May 4, with 60 wins in 226 mounts, while Jeff Runco led Brown 38-36 among the trainers. ■

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Jumping Away

Timber successes lead way to spring bonuses

By Joe Clancy

Imports abound in American steeplechasing – the country codes after the names give it away – but Maryland-breds stated their cases at the Grand National timber meet April 20.

Thoroughbreds bred in the state won three of the four races and ran 1-2 in the feature. The near sweep triggered owner, breeder and stallion bonuses from the Maryland Horse Breeders Association and helped prove that their introduction in 2022 was warranted.

"Steeplechase horses are an important part of Maryland's past, present and future and we are proud of their achievements this spring," said MHBA executive director Cricket Goodall. "We created these bonuses to incentivize the campaigning Maryland-bred steeplechasers, and to extend the reach of our program. Those aims are paying off and we look forward to continued success and support from the steeplechase community."

The program issues a 30-percent bonus to the owner and breeder of a Maryland-bred horse who finishes first, second or third in a National Steeplechase Association race at a Maryland meet, and a 10-percent bonus to the stallion owner if the horse is Maryland-sired. In all, $41,430 in bonuses were paid for spring jump races this year.

Awesome Adrian, an 11-year-old who races for his breeder Nancy Reed, led the way by winning the $35,000 Grand National timber stakes. A week earlier at My Lady's Manor, the son of Great Notion was third in a $15,000 allowance timber. In addition to $22,500 in purses from the two races, Reed received $13,500 in owner and breeder bonuses.

Nancy Reed bred and owns Grand National Stakes winner Awesome Adrian. The Centreville-area resident also owned top Welsh pony sire Carolina's Red Fox (below) for years.

Douglas Lees (2)

"It's a really nice thing," she said of the bonus program. "It's a different feeling when you breed one yourself, especially not knowing anything about what you're doing, and it turns out well."

A successful breeder of Welsh ponies for the show circuit, Reed underplays her knowledge when it comes to breeding Thoroughbreds – though a little luck went into Awesome Adrian. Her brother-in-law Baird Brittingham, a former executive at Delaware Park who owned horses as Lakeville Stables, gave Reed his race mare River Kwai in 2008. The daughter of Valley Crossing won eight races for trainer King T. Leatherbury, added another for Reed's Land's End Farm in 2009 and became a broodmare.

Reed did her homework and went to Northview Stallion Station to choose a mate in 2010. Her first choice, she's not sure but perhaps Lion Hearted, lost out because of some questions about his disposition and Northview proposed Great Notion as an alternative.

"I don't remember who was at the farm when I went to look at the stallions, but Great Notion was not the nick for River Kwai," said

Reed. "They said I should look at him. I took their advice, totally."

Then just getting started on what has turned into a long, stellar career in Maryland, Great Notion stood for $2,000. River Kwai delivered a colt in 2011 and – after year off – she returned to the stallion in 2012. The first foal, Handsome Hoyt, won twice on the flat and once each over hurdles and timber in career that ended in 2020. His younger full-brother, Awesome Adrian, is still going strong. Named for Reed's grandsons, the horses proved to be versatile and durable. They're also the end of the line as River Kwai died in an accident while turned out during a thunderstorm at Reed's farm near Centreville on the Eastern Shore and Reed has not bred another Thoroughbred.

She breeds winners and then some in the show ring with ponies reaching the A circuit, internationally known stallion Carolina's Red Fox and a slew of success stories bearing the Land's End prefix to their names.

"My daughter was riding on the A circuit and I said, 'What am I going to do when she stops riding? Maybe I'll breed them,' " Reed said. "That put this idea in my head. I went to England, bought a mare, bought a few mares, went with certain lines and got a lot of good advice. I ended up with a fabulous stallion people are still talking about. He made it fun."

And successful. Carolina's Red Fox died in 2005 due to complications from Cushings disease and laminitis, but not before finding success in the ring and the breeding shed. He was the Eastern Welsh Circuit and a national champion in 1993 and won the Welsh Pony and Cob Society of America Legion of Merit in 2004. His sons and daughters have won A circuit hunter shows and been United States Equestrian Federation national hunter pony champions, winning at Devon and Upperville amont others. In 2002, he was the USEF's top hunter pony sire and ranked in the top three several times. Various Land's End ponies populate leaderboards and show results now.

"The pedigree study of it is the same," Reed said when comparing breeding Welsh ponies to Thoroughbreds. "There's not quite as much money involved as with Thoroughbreds, and there are no winnings, but they don't cost as much to feed or take care of."

While Reed doesn't have a Thoroughbred broodmare now, Awesome Adrian's success might make her reconsider.

"I wish I could find another one of those Valley Crossing mares," she said with a laugh. "Great Notion is still going strong."

Douglas Lees (3)

Road to Oz, Mr. Fine Threads and Bogey's Image all earned bonuses for their breeders and owners with timber starts April 20.

The $2,250 in stallion bonuses from a timber horse won't make 24-year-old Great Notion's reputation any stronger than it already is, but every dollar counts.

With wins on the flat and over jumps, Awesome Adrian has earned $135,666. The Grand National was his first stakes win, and he backed it up with a second to division leader Schoodic in the $75,000 Virginia Gold Cup two weeks later. The dark bay led a 1-2 finish for Maryland-breds in the Grand National as Road to Oz finished second for owner Dan Baker and trainer Mark Beecher. Bred by Larry Johnson, the gray son of Quality Road and the Mizzen Mast mare Miz Magician won the 2022 Grand National (over Awesome Adrian) and opened 2024 with stakes-placings in the My Lady's Manor and Grand National. Those efforts earned bonuses of $3,390 each for Baker and Johnson.

Road to Oz won once in 13 starts on the flat for trainers Mike Trombetta and Kieron Magee before getting claimed for $5,000 by Beecher in 2019. Since shifting from hurdles to timber in 2021, he's won three of eight with a stakes win and three stakes placings.

Not to be outdone, Maryland-bred Sightseeing gelding Mr. Fine Threads won a $20,000 allowance timber on the Grand National card for Armata Stables and trainer Joe Davies. The 11-year-old was bred by William Harris, whose flat horses included Maryland Million winner Deer Run and graded stakes winner Sweet Goodbye. Harris died in 2013, the year Mr. Fine Threads was foaled. Unraced on the flat, the bay made four hurdle starts in 2019 and has won twice over timber. His dam, Seven Counties, won twice for Harris and produced four winners from six foals to race. The win earned Jean Harris and Armata $3,600 each in bonuses.

In the Grand National finale, Maryland-bred and -sired Bogey's Image continued his climb through the timber ranks for owners Harvey Goolsby, Achsah O'Donovan and Dan Colhoun and trainer Joe Davies. Bred by Ann and Bob Kinsley's South Branch Equine, the 7-year-old son of Imagining won and placed in a stakes over hurdles for his breeder and trainer Sean McDermott in 2021 before selling as a timber prospect.

The leggy chestnut broke his maiden in 2023, added a second win this year and stepped way up to be third in the 4-mile Virginia Gold Cup May 4. His Maryland win produced bonuses of $2,700 each for the owners and breeder, plus $900 for Anchor and Hope Farm where Imagining stood.

Bogey's Image's dam, Casablanca Lily (Ire) has produced steeplechase winners Casamo and Master Seville. Her Mosler filly of 2021, Sharmin, has placed twice on the flat for trainer Hugh McMahon.

Maryland-bred Include It finished second in the My Lady's Manor timber stakes, producing a bonus of $2,700 each for breeder Fitzhugh LLC and owner Riverdee Stable.

Steeplechase purses at four active meets in the state – My Lady's Manor, Grand National, Maryland Hunt Cup and Shawan Downs – are not generated by slots revenue or pari-mutuel handle though registered Maryland-breds are regular participants on the circuit. In addition to the timber horses above, spring 2024 successes came from:

• Who's Counting. $50,000 Good Night Shirt Handicap for horses rated 130 and below at Foxfield, Va., April 27. South Branch Equine owner/breeder. Sean McDermott trainer. The race was newly named for Maryland-bred steeplechase champion, Eclipse Award winner and

Hall of Famer. A son of Vancouver (Aus), Who's Counting has won three races on the flat and four over jumps in 25 total starts while earning $243,171 through May 9.

• Icandothat. $25,000 conditioned claiming hurdle at Tryon, N.C., April 13. Vivian Rall owner/breeder. Sean McDermott trainer. The son of Divining Rod and the Outflanker mare Calliope has won twice in five jump starts.

• Love Saga. $30,000 maiden special weight hurdle at Old Dominion, Va., April 6. Country Life Farm and Sagamoon LLC breeder. Ivy Hill Stable owner. Sean McDermott trainer. Love Saga is a 5-year-old daughter of Mosler and the Malibu Moon mare Sagamoon.

• Lightning Rod. $30,000 maiden special weight hurdle at Carolina Cup, S.C., March 30. Clarke Ohrstrom owner/breeder. Laird George trainer. A son of Bellamy Road and the Pulpit mare Katara, Lightning Rod won on the flat in 2021.

• Include It. $15,000 allowance timber at Cheshire, Pa., March 31. Fitzhugh LLC breeder. Riverdee Stable owner. Todd Wyatt trainer. ❧

NSA Maryland timber results

MARYLAND HUNT CUP. Glyndon, Md., April 27. 4 miles, 5&up, amateur jockeys. $100,000. Time: 8:17. Margin: neck. 1-Kinross Farm's BLACKHALL (Ire) (ch.g., 10, Caspar Netscher-GB—Win Cash, by Alhaarth); bred by Ann Fortune in Ireland; trainer Joe Davies; jockey Charlie Marshall. 2-Upland Partners' Shootist; Todd McKenna; Freddie Procter. 3-Armata Stable's Goodoldtimes (Ire); Mark Beecher; Dan Nevin. Also ran: Vintage Vinnie (Ire), Rocket Star Red, Wagner (Ire) (fell), Royal Ruse (lost rider), Withoutmoredo (Ire) (lost rider), Mr. Fine Threads (fell).

GRAND NATIONAL. Butler, Md., April 20.

Grand National Timber Stakes, 3¼ miles, 5&up, amateur jockeys. $35,000. Time: 6:37.80. Margin: 4½. 1-Nancy Reed's AWESOME ADRIAN (dk.b./br.g., 11, Great Notion—River Kwai, by Valley Crossing); bred by Nancy Reed in Md.; trainer Kathy Neilson; jockey Teddy Davies. 2-Dan Baker's Road to Oz; Mark Beecher; Brett Owings. 3-Upland Partners' Shootist; Todd McKenna; Freddie Procter. Also ran: Great Road, Goodoldtimes (Ire) (fell), Withoutmoreado (Ire) (lost rider).

Maiden timber, 3 miles, 5&up, amateur jockeys. $15,000. Time: 6:28. Margin: 1. 1-Greenlights'THE BUTLER YATES (Ire) (b.g., 7, Yeats—Kerry's Girl, by Flemensfirth); bred by James Hewitt in Ireland; trainer Leslie Young; jockey Freddie Procter. 2-Irv Naylor's Island Nation (Ire); Kathy Neilson; Conor Tierney. 3-Armata Stable's The Ballybreen Fox (Ire); Joe Davies; Teddy Davies. Also ran: Take Profit (pulled up).

Benjamin H. Murray Memorial, allowance timber (NW2), 3¼ miles, 5&up, amateur jockeys. $20,000. Time: 7:19.40. Margin: 4½. 1-Armata Stable's MR. FINE THREADS (b.g., 11, Sightseeing—Seven Counties, by Wayne County-Ire); bred by William Harris in Md.; trainer Joe Davies; jockey Teddy Davies. 2-Kinross Farm's Blackhall (Ire); Joe Davies; Charlie Marshall. 3-Lucy Goelet's Rocket Star Red; Mark Beecher; Brett Owings. Also ran: Queens Empire (Ire), Wagner (Ire) (off course), Brooklyn Speights (fell).

Western Run Plate, 3 miles over timber, 5&up, amateur/apprentice jockeys. $15,000. Time: 6:16.80. Margin: 35¼. 1-Harvey Goolsby III's BOGEY'S IMAGE (ch.g., 7, Imagining—Casablanca Lily (Ire), by Hurricane Run-Ire); bred by South Branch Equine in Md.; trainer Joe Davies; jockey Teddy Davies. 2-Adlestrop Hill's Paddy's Crown; Emily Hannum; Charlie Marshall; 3-Armata Stable's Chosen Mate (Ire); Ricky Hendriks; McLane Hendriks. Also ran: Master Seville (pulled up).

MY LADY'S MANOR. Monkton, Md., April 13.

My Lady's Manor Timber Stakes, 3 miles, 5&up, amateur jockeys. $50,000. Time: 6:21.40. Margin: neck. 1-Armata Stable's OUR FRIEND (Ire) (ch.g., 9, Shantou—Colleen Dubh, by Presenting); bred by Brian and Bronagh Lawler in Ireland; trainer Joe Davies; jockey Teddy Davies. 2-Riverdee Stable's Include It; Todd Wyatt; Elizabeth Scully. 3-Dan Baker's Road to Oz; Mark Beecher; Brett Owings. Also ran: Royal Ruse, Salamanca School.

John Rush Streett Memorial, allowance timber, 3 miles, 5&up, amateur jockeys. $25,000. Time: 6:26.40. Margin: 2½. 1-Keystone Thoroughbreds' HARD STRIKE (ch.g., 6, Hard Spun—May Be Now, by Smart Strike); bred by Mr. and Mrs. William Moriarty Apache Farm in Ky.; trainer Todd McKenna; jockey Andrew Burke Ott. 2-Daniel Doane's Theda's Boy; Kevin Boniface; Brett Owings. 3-EHB Racing's Huyana; Willie Dowling, Dan Nevin. Also ran: Stolen Shoes (GB), To Be Or Not to Be (fell), Hafajay (GB) (pulled up).

Thomas H. Voss Memorial, maiden timber, 3 miles, 5&up, amateur jockeys. $20,000. Time: 6:26. Margin: 1¼. 1-Hyggelig Haven's DRUID'S ALTAR (Ire) (b.g., 7, Mastercraftsman-Ire—Shell Garland, by Sadler's Wells); bred by Whisperview Trading in Ireland; trainer Willie Dowling; jockey Dan Nevin. 2-Happenstance's Hero's Return; Mark Beecher; Brett Owings. 3-Riverdee Stable's Queens Empire (Ire); Jack Fisher; Whitney Schweizer. Also ran: Hard Game, Junonia (lost rider), The Butler Yates (Ire) (pulled up), Be Counted (pulled up).

Thomas H. Voss Memorial, maiden timber, 3 miles, 5&up, amateur jockeys. $20,000. Time: 6:25. Margin: 2¾. 1-Merriebelle Stable's WAGNER (Ire) (b.g., 9, Mahler—Astalanda, by Sendawar-Ire); bred by Martin McDermott in Ireland; trainer Blythe Davies; jockey Freddie Procter. 2-Elizabeth Korrell's Don't Shout (Ire); owner; Virginia Korrell. 3-Irv Naylor's Island Nation (Ire); Kathy Neilson; Elizabeth Scully. Also ran: Ping Pong Champ, Animal Kingston, Blackhall (Ire), Mekong.

John D. Schapiro Memorial, open timber, 3 miles, 5&up, amateur/apprentice jockeys. $15,000. Time: 6:18. Margin: 10¼. 1-Upland Partners' RHYTHMIA (b.g., 8, Majestic Warrior—Mystic Rhythms, by Citidancer); bred by Vegso Racing Stable in Fla.; trainer Todd McKenna; jockey Freddie Procter. 2-Armata Stable's Vintage Vinnie (Ire); Joe Davies; Teddy Davies. 3-Nancy Reed's Awesome Adrian; Kathy Neilson; Dan Nevin. Also ran: Our Legend (Ire) (pulled up).

Maryland-bred Stakes Winners

Call Another Play continues Johnson family legacy in Weber City Miss

Jim McCue

Call Another Play earned her first stakes victory, and added another credential to the resume of R. Larry Johnson's foundation mare, Ran's Chick, by capturing Laurel Park's Weber City Miss Stakes for 3-year-old fillies April 20.

Johnson's homebred entered off back-to-back victories while risked for claiming prices of $62,500 (March 22) and $40,000 (Feb. 16) at Laurel. She started as the 5-1 third choice in the five-horse Weber City Miss, headed by Kentucky shipper and 3-5 favorite Shimmering Allure. Call Another Play dropped back to last in the early stages as multiple stakes winner Miss Harriett set early fractions of :24.23 and :47.66 and led around the far turn. Call Another Play, off the rail throughout, began to advance and poked a head in front of the leader near the top of the stretch and began to pull clear.

Call Another Play fended off recent Parx Racing stakes winner Jeanne Marie and won by 3½ lengths in 1:46.66 for 1 1/16 miles. Miss Harriett held third.

The win improved Call Another Play to 4-1-2 from nine starts, with earnings of $208,625. The Mike Trombetta trainee earned an automatic entry to the May 17 Black-Eyed Susan Stakes-G2 at Pimlico.

A daughter of Audible and the Johnson-bred Bernardini mare Past as Prelude, Call Another Play traces back four generations to Ran's Chick, a $2,500 purchase at Timonium by Johnson at Timonium in 1978. The family includes numerous stakes winners and stakes producers; Past as Prelude is a half-sibling to six winners, including stakes winner and stakes sire Street Magician.

From five starters, Past as Prelude has produced three winners, the others being stakes-placed runners Continentalcongres (Constitution) and Future Is Now (Great Notion), also entered on the Black-Eyed Susan card. Her most recent foal is the 2-year-old colt Places in My Past (McKinzie). She was bred to Audible for 2024. ❧

Intrepid Dream powers to Heavenly Cause

Intrepid Dream continued what might be one of the longest five-race win streaks in history when she accounted for the Heavenly Cause Stakes in her stakes debut April 13 at Laurel Park.

The gigantic 6-year-old mare, who weighed in at 1,357 pounds prior to the race, came in off a 4¼-length win in a third-level allowance March 2, her first start since Nov. 13, 2022.

The 1-2 favorite in the four-horse Heavenly Cause field going 1 mile broke well and drafted off the pace, letting 9-5 second choice Sweet Shild O Mine take the lead through soft fractions of :24.21 and :47.04.

Jevian Toledo asked Intrepid Dream for run on the turn, but Sweet Shild O Mine maintained a comfortable advantage entering the stretch.

As they charged home, Sweet Shild O Mine began to fade, and Intrepid Dream seized control at the eighth pole and crossed the wire 2½ lengths in front. Final time was 1:39.01.

Intrepid Dream won for the sixth time in seven starts, with earnings of $219,035. She broke her maiden in her debut at 2 at Delaware Park Sept. 2, 2020, as the even money favorite, but did not resurface again until July 24, 2021, when she finished sixth in a first-level allowance. Since then, she's a perfect 5-for-5, over two and a half years.

She won a non-winners of two claimer while risked for $32,000 at Delaware Aug. 30, 2021, then went to the sidelines again until late October 2022. She won two races at Delaware and Laurel in less than three weeks time, and was off again. After missing 2023, she came back with her March 2 win. She was entered in the Allaire duPont Distaff Stakes on the Black-Eyed Susan card May 17.

A homebred for Larry Fowler Jr. trained by Gary Capuano, Intrepid Dream is a daughter of Jess's Dream and the unraced Jump Start mare Intrepid Tour, making her a year-older full-sister to 2023 Maryland-bred Horse of the Year Intrepid Daydream.

Second dam Hongkong Tour (Broken Vow), was purchased for $6,000 by Fowler, with Capuano as agent, at the 2006 Keeneland September yearling sale. Hongkong Tour won four of five starts and produced four winners from six foals, including stakes-placed Touring Hong Kong (Cherokee's Boy), the dam of stakes winners V. I. P. Ticket (Windsor Castle) and Award Wanted (Macho Uno).

Jim McCue

Intrepid Tour has four foals of racing age. Her other winner is her first foal, the Buffum filly Starting Tour, who won six times. Three-year-old Intrepid's Legacy (Imagining) has placed twice in three starts. After producing a full-sister to the stakes winners in March 2023, Intrepid Tour was bred to Blofeld for 2024. ❧

Half to Monday Morning Qb leads Maryland-breds at OBS April

Maryland-breds did brisk business at the Ocala Breeders' Spring 2-year-old sale, April 16-19 in Ocala, Fla. Eleven Maryland-breds went through the ring, with eight selling, four for six figures.

The Maryland-bred sales topper was a Nyquist colt out of How My Heart Works consigned by Thorostock. He sold for $550,000 to Spendthrift Farm/MKW Racing and Breeding. Bred by Bowman and Higgins Stable, the dark bay sold for $205,000 to top last fall's Fasig-Tipton Midlantic yearling sale when part of the Becky Davis consignment. He breezed a furlong in 10 seconds.

Tom and Chris Bowman and the late Milton Higgins' homebred mare How My Heart Works (Not For Love) is also the dam of 2020 Maryland Million Classic winner Monday Morning Qb and Group 3-placed Asawer, a $200,000 sales yearling in 2021 and $450,000 May sale 2-year-old. The 12-year-old mare is a half-sister to Maryland-bred champion Awesome Flower, dam of multiple Grade 1 winner and multimillionaire Cyberknife. Her most recent foal is a City of Light filly born last May 6.

A half-sister to 2024 multiple graded stakes winner Post Time, from the first crop of McKinzie, sold for $140,000 to Baccari Bloodstock and Dream Walkin Farms from the de Meric Sales consignment. She also breezed a furlong in 10 seconds, and was bred by the Bowmans, their son Brooke, and Higgins. She's out of Brooke Bowman's stakes-winning mare Vielsalm (Fairbanks), who has also produced winners What Does It Take (Munnings) and Battle of Bastogne (Street Magician) from three foals of racing age.

A colt by Jimmy Creed out of Moon Vision, bred by Country Life Farm and Moon Vision Broodmare, sold for $115,000 to West Point Thoroughbreds, L.E.B. Agent, from the Grassroots Training and Sales consignment, having also breezed in 10 seconds. This was his third trip through a sales ring as he brought $38,000 at the 2022 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic December mixed sale and $65,000 at Keeneland September in 2023. His second dam, Fifteen Moons (Malibu Moon), is the dam of stakes winner Mayla (Sharp Humor) and a half-sister to Grade 1 winner and producer Hookedonthefeelin, as well as to the dam of Grade 1 Acorn winner Midnight Lucky.

Judit Seipert

Maryland-bred Nyquist—How My Heart Works colt sold for $550,000 at OBS April.

D.J. Stable paid $110,000 for a gray Liam's Map colt out of the Royal Bloodstock Sales consignment. Bred by David Wade, Paul O'Loughlin and Jeff Matty Jr., the colt went a furlong in :09.4. He sold for $28,000 at last fall's Fasig-Tipton Midlantic yearling sale, and $17,000 at the 2022 Midlantic December mixed sale. His stakes-placed dam Miss Avalon (Jump Start) earned $383,364 and is a half-sister to two stakes horses. He's from the family of Canadian champion Cash Deposit.

Maryland-breds sold for $1,019,000, an average of $127,375 and a median of $82,500. Last year, six sold for an average of $156,750. ❧

Maryland Fund Report

Bonuses paid for races run
in February 2024 at Maryland tracks

Breeder bonuses

Includes the additional 10 percent Maryland-sired bonus for winners of maiden races, initiated Jan. 1 during the 2022 Laurel winter meet. That bonus is reflected in the second figure earned for the race.

Leo J. Ambrogi—Razorette: Feb. 10, 2nd race, $517.50.

Anchor and Hope Farm Inc.—I Have Courage: Feb. 11, 10th race, $2,092.50. Nick's Little Boy: Feb. 23, 9th race, $371.25. She'sarollingstone: Feb. 16, 8th race, $2,205. ($4,668.75)

Barak Farm—Always Forward: Feb. 25, 1st race, $2,835. Fivecommatwo: Feb. 3, 1st race, $945. ($3,780)

Barak Farm and Dinos Thoroughbreds LLC—Trash Talkin Larry: Feb. 24, 9th race, $1,170.

Barak Farm and Sharon Dodgen—Backnthewoods: Feb. 18, 4th race, $4,995.

David Baxter Sr.—Hemp: Feb. 9, 2nd race, $4,455. Miss Harriett: Feb. 24, 7th race, $13,500. ($17,955)

William Bayne and Super C Racing—Naughty Streak: Feb. 3, 10th race, $517.50.

BB Horses—Royal Seamstress: Feb. 2, 7th race, $2,160.

Black Fox Farm—Remembering Wilbur: Feb. 24, 4th race, $450.

Charles Blanford—Go Sherry Go: Feb. 9, 7th race, $1,102.50.

Bonita Farm—Calypso Ghost: Feb. 11, 10th race, $348.75. Malinois: Feb. 2, 3rd race, $5,535/$1,845. Never Done: Feb. 4, 5th race, $495; Feb. 18, 9th race, $495. ($8,718.75)

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Adair Bonsal Jr.—Imstillhere: Feb. 9, 1st race, $517.50. Valleyshark: Feb. 3, 10th race, $3,105/$1,035. ($4,657.50)

Richard H. Bosshard Jr.—Return Fire: Feb. 3, 10th race, $1,035.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman—Gabriel Seven: Feb. 9, 5th race, $3,105/$1,035. Proper Attire: Feb. 11, 8th race, $652.50. ($4,792.50)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and Dr. Brooke Bowman—Battle of Bastogne: Feb. 4, 1st race, $3,375. Feelin So Lucky: Feb. 16, 4th race, $922.50. What Does It Take: Feb. 17, 2nd race, $832.50. Whatsyourbigidea: Feb. 17, 4th race, $1,080. ($6,210)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman, Dr. Brooke Bowman and Estate of Milton P. Higgins III—Post Time: Feb. 17, 9th race, $13,500

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and Rebecca Davis—Double Crown: Feb. 17, 6th race, $4,500.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman, Rebecca Davis and Dr. Brooke Bowman—Brother Lad: Feb. 11, 6th race, $4,590/$1,530. ($6,120)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and R. Larry Johnson—Up Against It: Feb. 9, 4th race, $3,240; Feb. 16, 6th race, $3,240. ($6,480)

Bowman and Higgins Stable—K Kake Pop: Feb. 10, 4th race, $765. Laughing Fit: Feb. 18, 1st race, $922.50. Master of None: Feb. 11, 4th race, $3,375. No Walk Inthe Park: Feb. 3, 3rd race, $1,215. ($6,277.50)

Melissa Cantacuzene—Charming Way: Feb. 2, 8th race, $7,155; Feb. 17, 7th race, $13,500. ($20,655)

Dennis A. Cardoza—Captain Cardo: Feb. 24, 4th race, $2,700.

Chanceland Farm—Full Irish: Feb. 23, 7th race, $1,080.

Clover Hill Farm Inc.—Bo's Bourbon: Feb. 3, 6th race, $2,970.

Angela B. Coombs—Catahoula Moon: Feb. 4, 8th race, $2,205.

Cottonwood Stable LLC—Seven's Eleven: Feb. 17, 9th race, $4,500.

Country Life Farm—Ace Nine Nine: Feb. 4, 3rd race, $3,240.

Country Life Farm and Basedonatruestory LLC—Sheherhers: Feb. 3, 3rd race, $3,645/$1,215. ($4,860)

Country Life Farm, Paul Berube and Karen Linnel—Captain Quint: Feb. 10, 1st race, $1,845; Feb. 23, 7th race, $6,480. Touisset: Feb. 4, 7th race, $1,102.50. ($9,427.50)

Country Life Farm and Missy Rules LLC—Liquidator: Feb. 2, 7th race, $6,480.

Country Life Farm and Stone LLC—Breaking Rules: Feb. 10, 6th race, $1,035.

Country Roads Ltd.—My Flicker: Feb. 18, 8th race, $1,260.

Crystal Park Stables Inc.—Brilliant Ice: Feb. 2, 6th race, $6,615.

Dark Hollow Farm—Maryland Moon: Feb. 2, 1st race, $4,320; Feb. 10, 1st race, $922.50. ($5,242.50)

Dark Hollow Farm, D. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. David Schwaber, et al—Destination: Feb. 3, 7th race, $1,845; Feb. 23, 5th race, $922.50. ($2,767.50)

Cynthia J. Darrah-Hipple—Lady Zeta: Feb. 10, 9th race, $2,385.

Double NK Partnership and Dennis Jankiewicz—Disputed Notion: Feb. 17, 5th race, $2,970.

Elevate Equine LLC, DDRS and Ron Cuneo—Patriotic Party: Feb. 3, 4th race, $348.75

Annette Eubanks and Daniel Eubanks—Band Camp: Feb. 16, 9th race, $3,105/$1,035. ($4,140)

Finn's Nickel LLC and Anchor and Hope Farm Inc.—Exculpatory: Feb. 23, 8th race, $1,260.

Flying H Stables LLC—Stellars in Charge: Feb. 16, 1st race, $765.

Robert E. Gamber—I Can Do It: Feb. 23, 4th race, $922.50.

Glenangus Farm LLC—Deeds of Love: Feb. 10, 9th race, $1,192.50. Proper Storm: Feb. 4, 5th race, $990. R B's Big Moment: Feb. 23, 3rd race, $517.50. ($2,700)

Grandview Stable Inc. and Dominick J. Juno—Dolice Vita: Feb. 17, 3rd race, $2,385.

Greycross Stable LLC—Bay Street: Feb. 17, 4th race, $2,160.

Maria M. Haire—Get Like Mike: Feb. 4, 2nd race, $3,645.

Michael J. Harrison DVM—Sunny Sunshine: Feb. 24, 6th race, $1,215.

Nancy B. Heil—Karan's Notion: Feb. 2, 9th race, $1,260.

Hillwood Stable LLC—Battling Time: Feb. 25, 7th race, $2,205.

Holly House Farm—Arden'sluckytobe: Feb. 2, 5th race, $6,480.

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Holt and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Palumbo—Shinelikeadiamond: Feb. 18, 5th race, $2,227.50.

Kyle M. Horlacher and Charles Blanford—I Had Enough: Feb. 4, 2nd race, $1,215; Feb. 25, 3rd race, $607.50. ($1,822.50)

Michael and Debbie Horning—My Sugar Boo: Feb. 25, 7th race, $1,102.50.

Housatonic Bloodstock LLC, Nicole Martin and Ciara Denicolo—Imaginized: Feb. 11, 6th race, $765.

Jagger Inc.—Guaponess: Feb. 23, 2nd race, $1,125. Speedyness: Feb. 24, 8th race, $13,500. ($14,625)

Jagger Inc. and Super C Racing Inc.—Derbyness: Feb. 10, 7th race, $4,455.

R. Larry Johnson—Call Another Play: Feb. 16, 4th race, $5,535. Come Rain Or Shine: Feb. 4, 9th race, $1,845. Energy Efficient: Feb. 2, 1st race, $720; Feb. 24, 1st race, $1,845. Great Heavens: Feb. 2, 5th race, $2,160; Feb. 23, 7th race, $2,160. Heldish: Feb. 9, 2nd race, $1,485; Feb. 25, 6th race, $5,535. Medagooch: Feb. 4, 9th race, $922.50. ($22,207.50)

Joanne P. Krishack—Commanding General: Feb. 9, 4th race, $1,080.

Lady Olivia at North Cliff LLC—Blame the Tux: Feb. 4, 8th race, $1,102.50. Buckin' Dreamer: Feb. 25, 3rd race, $3,645/$1,215. Davyjonz: Feb. 18, 3rd race, $1,845. Glass of Courage: Feb. 2, 3rd race, $1,845. Never Grew Up: Feb. 9, 5th race, $1,035. Seeker: Feb. 24, 2nd race, $517.50. ($11,205)

Carl Lanier—Box N Ben: Feb. 4, 1st race, $562.50. Freeze the Fire: Feb. 9, 8th race, $2,205. Mosler Time: Feb. 10, 10th race, $4,590/$1,530. ($8,887.50)

Estate of Fred T. Lewis Sr. DVM—Celtic Contender: Feb. 18, 3rd race, $5,535/$1,845. ($7,380)

Cal Lynch, Dr. Tom Keenan and Spendthrift Farm—Under the Overpass: Feb. 11, 6th race, $1,530.

Magic Carpet Racing—Buckin' Lucky: Feb. 4, 6th race, $517.50.

Estate of Robert T. Manfuso—Catch the Kitten: Feb. 3, 1st race, $472.50; Feb. 18, 2nd race, $945. ($1,417.50)

Marathon Farm Inc.—Circle P: Feb. 24, 8th race, $2,250. Fool Yourself: Feb. 2, 4th race, $900. ($3,150)

Haralabos Maravelias—Nico Lucky: Feb. 16, 9th race, $1,035.

Glenn R. Martin—Princess Anisa: Feb. 23, 3rd race, $1,035.

James F. McIngvale—Restless: Feb. 16, 7th race, $765.

Elizabeth M. Merryman—Midnight Renegade: Feb. 2, 5th race, $1,080.

Mezza Luna Farm LLC—In the Dance: Feb. 16, 3rd race, $1,845.

Mikelle Farm—True Sunshine: Feb. 25, 5th race, $4,455.

Mikelle Farm and Marilyn Morales—Missy Boss: Feb. 23, 3rd race, $3,105/$1,035. ($4,140)

Kevin P. Morgan—Fancy Princess: Feb. 23, 6th race, $450; Mavilus: Feb. 18, 7th race, $2,385. ($2,835)

Murmur Farm—Golden Charm: Feb. 9, 3rd race, $1,845. Mister Agent: Feb. 9, 6th race, $4,455. Royal Spy: Feb. 3, 4th race, $2,092.50; Feb. 24, 4th race, $900. ($9,292.50)

No Guts No Glory Farm—Bandits Warrior: Feb. 2, 4th race, $2,700.

Paul O'Loughlin, David Wade and Jeff Matty Jr.—Classy Chick: Feb. 4, 4th race, $765.

Charles V. Parker—Mose Perfect: Feb. 17, 2nd race, $1,665.

A. Leonard Pineau—Crossland: Feb. 18, 6th race, $1,102.50.

A. John Price—Wesley Thomas: Feb. 9, 6th race, $1,485.

Cynthia K. Rickman—Casino Tricks: Feb. 23, 2nd race, $3,375. Crownedcountcristo: Feb. 3, 8th race, $371.25; Feb. 23, 9th race, $742.50. ($4,488.75)

Dr. and Mrs. William E. Riddle Jr.—Tubtimsiam: Feb. 24, 2nd race, $3,105.

Randy Ridgely—Finaljump: Feb. 23, 1st race, $1,215.

Rolling Meadows Farm—Summerstateofmind: Feb. 16, 7th race, $1,530. Sweeterthanwhiskey: Feb. 3, 3rd race, $607.50. ($2,137.50)

Franklin G. Smith Sr.—Looking for Water: Feb. 11, 2nd race, $562.50; Feb. 25, 1st race, $472.50. Porch Swing: Feb. 24, 9th race, $3,510. ($4,545)

South Branch Equine LLC—Sharmin: Feb. 24, 6th race, $607.50.

Bob G. Sowder—Irish Lace: Feb. 23, 6th race, $900.

James B. Steele Jr.—Hampden Lane: Feb. 23, 2nd race, $562.50. My Endeavor: Feb. 3, 5th race, $1,035; Feb. 24, 2nd race, $1,035. ($2,632.50)

Super C Racing Inc.—Dance for Green: Feb. 24, 3rd race, $1,485.

Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC—Frightland: Feb. 11, 5th race, $4,455.

Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC and Ellen Charles—Society Ball: Feb. 3, 7th race, $922.50; Feb. 10, 8th race, $6,345/$2,115. ($9,382.50)

Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC and Two Legends Farm—Titian Tyrant: Feb. 17, 10th race, $3,105/$1,035. ($4,140)

James F. Thames—Irish Warlock: Feb. 3, 6th race, $990; Feb. 17, 5th race, $990; Feb. 24, 5th race, $990. ($2,970)

The Elkstone Group LLC—Brady Bear: Feb. 18, 3rd race, $922.50. Click to Confirm: Feb. 25, 4th race, $3,915. Countryclub Couple: Feb. 3, 7th race, $5,535. Order Ofthe Kettle: Feb. 24, 1st race, $922.50. ($11,295)

Thornmar Farm LLC—At First Sight: Feb. 24, 6th race, $3,645/$1,215. Canoodle: Feb. 11, 8th race, $1,305. Chochocho: Feb. 25, 3rd race, $1,215. Goodbye Note: Feb. 2, 3rd race, $922.50. Mail Call: Feb. 18, 2nd race, $472.50. Midsummers Eve: Feb. 9, 3rd race, $5,535. Square Slice: Feb. 16, 1st race, $4,590/$1,530. Take a Hint: Feb. 9, 8th race, $6,615. ($27,045)

Thornmar Farm and Tim Keefe—Too Many Kisses: Feb. 17, 4th race, $6,480.

2500 Determined Holdings—Determined Driver: Feb. 24, 7th race, $4,500.

Two Legends Farm—Devil Pays in Gold: Feb. 25, 2nd race, $2,970.

Two Legends Farm and Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC—Amie's Symphony: Feb. 18, 1st race, $1,845.

David H. Wade—Rominski: Feb. 11, 9th race, $7,155.

Maureen Wade—Honor the Truth: Feb. 18, 2nd race, $2,835.

Susan Wantz—He's On Fire: Feb. 17, 5th race, $495.

John E. Williamson III—Ournationonparade: Feb. 2, 9th race, $7,560. Stickwiththecolors: Feb. 23, 5th race, $5,535/$1,845. ($14,940)

Willow Oaks Stable LLC—Under the Radar: Feb. 2, 6th race, $1,102.50; $1,845. ($3,307.50)

Donald Clifford Wilson—Thencomemorning: Feb. 18, 9th race, $990.

Winding Creek Farm—Bruder: Feb. 4, 9th race, $5,535/$1,845. ($7,380)

Stallion bonuses

BANDBOX (Band Camp: Feb. 16, 9th race, $1,035. Box N Ben: Feb. 4, 1st race, $187.50. Seven's Eleven: Feb. 17, 9th race, $1,500. Take a Hint: Feb. 9, 8th race, $2,205): Northview Stallion Station—$4,927.50.

BARBADOS (Hampden Lane: Feb. 23, 2nd race, $187.50. My Endeavor: Feb. 3, 5th race, $345; Feb. 24, 2nd race, $345): Shamrock Farm—$877.50.

BLOFELD (Charming Way: Feb. 2, 8th race, $2,385; Feb. 17, 7th race, $4,500. Golden Charm: Feb. 9, 3rd race, $615. Goodbye Note: Feb. 2, 3rd race, $307.50. Miss Harriett: Feb. 24, 7th race, $4,500. Mister Agent: Feb. 9, 6th race, $1,485. Royal Spy: Feb. 3, 4th race, $697.50; Feb. 24, 4th race, $300. Square

Slice: Feb. 16, 1st race, $1,530): Blofeld Syndicate—$16,320.

BOURBON COURAGE (Davyjonz: Feb. 18, 3rd race, $615. Double Crown: Feb. 17, 6th race, $1,500. Glass of Courage: Feb. 2, 3rd race, $615. I Have Courage: Feb. 11, 10th race, $697.50. Never Grew Up: Feb. 9, 5th race, $345. Proper Storm: Feb. 4, 5th race, $330. She'sarollingstone: Feb. 16, 8th race, $735. Sunny Sunshine: Feb. 24, 6th race, $405. Sweeterthanwhiskey: Feb. 3, 3rd race, $202.50): Bourbon Courage Syndicate—$5,445.

BUFFUM (Commanding General: Feb. 9, 4th race, $360. Fancy Princess: Feb. 23, 6th race, $150. Shinelikeadiamond: Feb. 18, 5th race, $742.50): Buffum Syndicate—$1,252.50.

CAL NATION (Ournationonparade: Feb. 2, 9th race, $2,520): Cal Nation Syndicate.

DESPITE THE ODDS (Up Against It: Feb. 9, 4th race, $1,080; Feb. 16, 6th race, $1,080): R. Larry Johnson—$2,160.

DIVINING ROD (Bo's Bourbon: Feb. 3, 6th race, $990. Breaking Rules: Feb. 10, 6th race, $345. Liquidator: Feb. 2, 7th race, $2,160. Looking for Water: Feb. 11, 2nd race, $187.50; Feb. 25, 1st race, $157.50. Sheherhers: Feb. 3, 3rd race, $1,215. Stickwiththecolors: Feb. 23, 5th race, $1,845. Under the Radar: Feb. 2, 6th race, $367.50; Feb. 18, 6th race, $735): Divining Rod Syndicate—$8,002.50.

DORTMUND (Dolice Vita: Feb. 17, 3rd race, $795. Malinois: Feb. 2, 3rd race, $1,845. Never Done: Feb. 4, 5th race, $165; Feb. 18, 9th race, $165): Kaleem S. Shah—$2,970.

FRIESAN FIRE (Freeze the Fire: Feb. 9, 8th race, $735. He's On Fire: Feb. 17, 5th race, $165. Naughty Streak: Feb. 3, 10th race, $172.50. Return Fire: Feb. 3, 10th race, $345. Thencomemorning: Feb. 18, 9th race, $330): Friesan Fire Syndicate—$1,747.50.

GOLDEN LAD (Brother Lad: Feb. 11, 6th race, $1,530. Casino Tricks: Feb. 23, 2nd race, $1,125. Catahoula Moon: Feb. 4, 8th race, $735. Classy Chick: Feb. 4, 4th race, $255. Crownedcountcristo: Feb. 3, 8th race, $123.75; Feb. 23, 9th race, $247.50. Go Sherry Go: Feb. 9, 7th race, $367.50. I Had Enough: Feb. 4, 2nd race, $405; Feb. 25, 3rd race, $202.50. Nico Lucky: Feb. 16, 9th race, $345. Remembering Wilbur: Feb. 24, 4th race, $150. Wesley Thomas: Feb. 9, 6th race, $495): Golden Lad Syndicate—$5,981.25.

GREAT NOTION (At First Sight: Feb. 24, 6th race, $1,215. Battling Time: Feb. 25, 7th race, $735. Brilliant Ice: Feb. 2, 6th race, $2,205. Bruder: Feb. 4, 9th race, $1,845. Disputed Notion: Feb. 17, 5th race, $990. Great Heavens: Feb. 2, 5th race, $720; Feb. 23, 7th race, $720. Heldish: Feb. 9, 2nd race, $495; Feb. 25, 6th race, $1,845. Karan's Notion: Feb. 2, 9th race, $420. My Flicker: Feb. 18, 8th race, $420. Rominski: Feb. 11, 9th race, $2,385. Society Ball: Feb. 3, 7th race, $307.50; Feb. 10, 8th race, $2,115. Speedyness: Feb. 24, 8th race, $4,500. Whatsyourbigidea: Feb. 17, 4th race, $360): Great Notion Syndicate—$21,277.50

HOLY BOSS (Blame the Tux: Feb. 4, 8th race, $367.50. Crossland: Feb. 18, 6th race, $367.50. Missy Boss: Feb. 23, 3rd race, $1,035): Holy Boss Syndicate—$1,770.

IMAGINING (Buckin' Dreamer: Feb. 25, 3rd race, $1,215. Imaginized: Feb. 11, 6th race, $255. In the Dance: Feb. 16, 3rd race, $615. Proper Attire: Feb. 11, 8th race, $217.50. Summerstateofmind: Feb. 16, 7th race, $510): Imagining Syndicate—$2,812.50.

IRISH WAR CRY (Celtic Contender: Feb. 18, 3rd race, $1,845. Dance for Green: Feb. 24, 3rd race, $495. Fivecommatwo: Feb. 3, 1st race, $315. Full Irish: Feb. 23, 7th race, $360. Irish Lace: Feb. 23, 6th race, $300. Irish Warlock: Feb. 3, 6th race, $330; Feb. 17, 5th race, $330; Feb. 24, 5th race, $330. Porch Swing: Feb. 24, 9th race, $1,170. Royal Seamstress: Feb. 2, 7th race, $720): Northview Stallion Station Inc.—$6,195.

KOBE'S BACK (Trash Talkin Larry: Feb. 24, 9th race, $390): Bonita Farm.

LONG RIVER (Nick's Little Boy: Feb. 23, 9th race, $123.75. Razorette: Feb. 10, 2nd race, $172.50. Seeker: Feb. 24, 2nd race, $172.50. Valleyshark: Feb. 3, 10th race, $1,035): Long River Syndicate—$1,503.75.

MADEFROMLUCKY (Arden'sluckytobe: Feb. 2, 5th race, $2,160. Buckin' Lucky: Feb. 4, 6th race, $172.50. Feelin So Lucky: Feb. 16, 4th race, $307.50. Titian Tyrant: Feb. 17, 10th race, $1,035): Madefromlucky Syndicate—$3,675.

MOSLER (Bandits Warrior: Feb. 2, 4th race, $900. Bay Street: Feb. 17, 4th race, $720. Captain Quint: Feb. 10, 1st race, $615; Feb. 23, 7th race, $2,160. Fool Yourself: Feb. 2, 4th race, $300. Mose Perfect: Feb. 17, 2nd race, $555. Mosler Time: Feb. 10, 10th race, $1,530. Sharmin: Feb. 24, 6th race, $202.50. Touisset: Feb. 4, 7th race, $367.50): Mosler Syndicate—$7,350.

ORIENTATE (Mavilus: Feb. 18, 7th race, $795): Orientate Syndicate

REDEEMED (Patriotic Party: Feb. 3, 4th race, $116.25): Redeemed Syndicate.

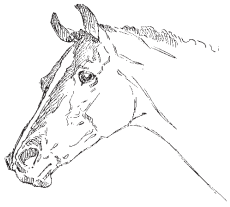
STREET MAGICIAN (Battle of Bastogne: Feb. 4, 1st race, $1,125. Gabriel Seven: Feb. 9, 5th race, $1,035): R. Larry Johnson—$2,160.

SUPER NINETY NINE (Ace Nine Nine: Feb. 4, 3rd race, $1,080. Hemp: Feb. 9, 2nd race, $1,485. Princess Anisa: Feb. 23, 3rd race, $345): Country Life Farm—$2,910.

Maryland-bred top earners in 2024

(through May 15)

1. Post Time	$365,000	11. Intrepid Dream	$98,640
2. Jaxon Traveler	234,850	12. Charming Way	96,570
3. Call Another Play	141,815	13. Tocayo	95,700
4. Speedyness	128,810	14. Double Crown	92,350
5. Take a Hint	116,355	15. Malinois	90,390
6. Rominski	116,280	16. Mindframe	87,360
7. Determined Driver	113,810	17. Arden'sluckytobe	84,000
8. Miss Harriett	112,310	18. Society Ball	82,225
9. Kennebec	105,180	19. Inside Stunt	82,000
10. My Flicker	104,300	20. Northern Glow	76,985



Maryland Foal Report

ANGEL OF THE NILE, by Pioneerof the Nile, b.f., April 17, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria M. Haire.

ANOTHER COUGAR, by With Distinction, b.f., April 24, by Hoppertunity. Maria Haire.

ANOTHERLOVEOFMINE, by Not For Love, b.f., April 9, by Galawi (Ire). Jason Cole.

ATLANTIC AVENUE, by Any Given Saturday, ch.f., April 20, by Golden Lad. Charles C.D. McGill.

AUNT SHERRI, by Stephen Got Even, b.c., April 14, by Blofeld. Sharon Dodgen and Barak Farm.

BEAR MOON, by Gators N Bears, ch.f., April 1, by Golden Lad. Cathy T. Denelsbeck.

BEN'S MOON CAT, by Imagining, b.f., April 28, by Uncle Lino. Carol Anne Fox.

CENTSATIONAL, by Big Drama, b.c., April 18, by Mandaloun. Moontower Racing.

COURAGEOUS JULIE, by Pioneerof the Nile, b.c., April 6, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria Haire.

DENDROBIA, by Denman (Aus), b.c., April 19, by Holy Boss. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

EGOT, by Dehere, gr./ro.c., April 5, by Blofeld. Horseshoe Valley Equine Center LLC and Best Foot Forward Holdings.

EMPRESS MONTEZ, by Shakin It Up, gr./ro.c., April 25, by Colonel Liam. Maria M. Haire.

ESTIVAL, by Summer Front, b.c., April 15, by Mitole. The Stables at Mezza Luna LLC.

EVAN'S NICE NOW, by Trappe Shot, ch.f., April 1, by Madefromlucky. Hector Villagomez.

FLIRTATION WALK, by Outflanker, b.f., April 27, by Barbados. Little Man Farm. Mare to Barbados.

GLAMOUR PUSS, by Catienus, b.c., April 15, by Tacitus. Dreamtime Stables LLC.

GLIMPSE, by Touch Gold, b.f., April 19, by Maximum Security. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes. Mare to Bourbon Courage.

HAY DILLY, by Candy Ride (Arg), ch.c., April 21, by Liam's Map. Timothy Rooney. Mare to Arcangelo.

HOLIDAY HOPES, by Harlan's Holiday, b.c., April 20, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria M. Haire.

JUST SAY GOODBYE, by Not For Love, b.f., April 14, by Friesan Fire. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

KITTYLUCK, by Exchange Rate, b.c., April 22, by Blofeld. Best A Luck Farm.

LAST KISS, by Lemon Drop Kid, b.f., April 23, by Great Notion. Mr. and Mrs. A. John Price.

LAURIE'S CHOICE, by Congrats, b.f., April 4, by Leofric. Trinity West Stables Ltd.

LIL BOSS, by Street Boss, b.f., April 24, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria Montez Haire.

LISHEEN, by Into Mischief, b.f., April 23, by Maclean's Music. Timothy J. Rooney. Mare to Proxy.

MARGIE'S HEAVEN, by Golden Lad, ch.f., April 18, by Uncle Lino. Joseph Besecker.

MISS HERMES, by Lemon Drop Kid, b.c., April 30, by Dialed In. Chad Ahalt.

NEARLY A NOTION, by Great Notion, b.f., April 26, by Galawi (Ire). Erika Neuberg.

ONE MASSIVE CAT, by Mass Media, dk.b./br.c., April 15, by Kobe's Back. Robert Atkinson and Mary Atkinson.

PHI BETA KAFFA, by Kafwain, b.c., April 16, by Golden Lad. Leslie Mills.

PRINCESSOFTHENILE, by Pioneerof the Nile, ch.c., April 25, by Golden Lad. Maria Haire.

RUBIESANDWRANGLERS, by Fairbanks, b.f., April 7, by Galawi (Ire). Lee Vosters.

SAUCY COUNTESS, by Tabasco Cat, dk.b./br.f., April 16, by Barbados. Little Man Farm.

SIX TONSAFUN, by Not For Love, ch.f., April 10, by Tiz the Law. Walter Nelson Vieser II.

STRIKING BELLA, by Smart Strike, b.c., April 18, by Mystic Guide. Timothy Rooney. Mare to Girvin.

VIOLENT TRICK, by Violence, ch.c., April 13, by Greatest Honour. Dan Leach and Valencia Leach.

WITCH, by Magician (Ire), b.c., Feb. 23, by Brody's Cause. Mr. and Mrs. Robert and Mary Atkinson.

THE THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY NEWSLETTER

Post Time

- News, views and insights that matter to breeders, owners and racing industry professionals - **June 2024** -

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Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey

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New Jersey Gold Medal Horse Farm Program

Environmentally friendly farms give the consumer greater confidence in the environmental sustainability of agriculture and encourages public support for the industry. This award gives recognition to the most outstanding equine farms and their environmental sustainability and management.

Eligibility

All New Jersey horse farm owners are invited to submit an application for the award. Farms receiving the highest scores will receive a Gold Medal Equine Farm plaque to be displayed on their farm. Awards will be based upon environmental stewardship, general farm appearance, an implemented AWMP or CNMP, and adherence to the following points:

1. Controlling animal access to the waters of the State;

2. Storing manure at least 100 linear feet from surface waters of the State; "Water or waters of the State means the ocean and its estuaries, all springs, streams, and bodies of surface or ground water, whether natural or artificial, within the boundaries of the State or subject to its jurisdiction."

3. Applying manure using proper nutrient management practices;

4. Minimizing odors from manure storage and application areas;

5. Optimizing the beneficial use of nutrients from manure and bedding materials;

6. Having a biosecurity program in place to minimize disease risk.

How is the Selection Completed?

The selection is completed by a pre-determined ranking process that requires both a producer application and an evaluative process.

Selection process

1. Gold Medal Application. Producers need to complete an application that includes general information about their farm (type, horse numbers, acreage, etc.), a copy of their AWMP/CNMP, and a self-assessment of their farm. A $100 application fee will be required of all applicants to go towards continuing the program.

2. Review. A team of reviewers will walk through the farm and make recommendations about the farm. These recommendations have two uses: first, to evaluate the farm for suitability for the program, second to point out any deficiencies. The review team will be made up of members from RCE, NJDA, NRCS, and any other appropriate groups such as might be represented on the USDA-NRCS Technical Committee.

3. The award program may be used for subsequent advertising or promotion for environmental stewardship in New Jersey. Horse farmers, who apply to participate in this program, if selected, agree to cooperate with promotional activities and make all reasonable efforts to maintain the level of environmental stewardship on their operations.

Continued on next page

How the Judging Works

1. Applications will be due Aug. 1. These will be reviewed for completeness prior to judging.

2. Judging teams will visit farms during the month of September.

3. The judges' final ranking will be made and results given to the Rutgers University Equine Science Center and the NJDA Division of Agricultural and Natural Resources.

4. Results will be announced at the Equine Science Center Update.

5. Awards will be given at the New Jersey State Agriculture Convention.

6. Any previously awarded farm failing to maintain program standards will have their award revoked.

For more details, as well as a link to the application, please go to: https://go.rutgers.edu/ESC-GMHF

Equine Discounts for NTRA Members

Call 866-678-4289 or visit EquineDiscounts.com to start saving on the following brands for your farm!

John Deere offers substantial discounts on everything from mowers and tractors to GatorsTM, hay and construction equipment. • The MSRP Program – Professional operations can save up to 28 percent on select equipment • The Cash Bonus Program – All members can save up to $2,700 with vouchers that are stackable with special financing • Construction Equipment – All members can save up to 26 percent on select equipment.

Big Ass Fans is committed to Energy Efficient Air movement and providing comfort to the equine industry. Equine members will receive up to a 25 percent discount on qualifying purchases for all Equine Facilities and Personal Residences.

Save up to 40 percent discount on Sherwin Williams paints, in-store products and wall coverings

ODP Business Solutions™ (formerly Office Depot) and Equine Discounts have partnered to provide exclusive benefits and savings on a wide selection of office products and services. ODP Business Solutions™ is here to support the success of your business.

You want great coverage at a great price. Farmers Insurance® has coverage options that you can customize and lots of ways to save with discounts and Policy PerksSM. Farmers offers a broad range of product offerings including Home, Auto, Business, Life and Recreational insurance. Save an average of $730 with your equine discount at Farmers Insurance today!

Ronald S. Dancer Memorial Scholarship

The Equine Science Center is happy to announce the first-ever application cycle for the Ronald S. Dancer Memorial Scholarship, due June 1 for this year.

The scholarship(s) will be awarded for the following academic year. Please see the application form link on the right, and the scholarship details below. Rutgers Equine Science Center and the Department of Animal Sciences at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, are pleased to announce the availability of financial assistance to undergraduates majoring in Animal Sciences with a concentration in Equine Science.

Scholarships will be awarded annually to fulltime undergraduate Rutgers University students (including at least one incoming student).

Criteria include New Jersey residency, acceptance or current enrollment at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, academic merit, demonstrated interest in equine science, and demonstrated leadership and service to community, school, and to the horse industry. Scholarships may be renewed annually with the approval of the scholarship selection committee.

The Ronald S. Dancer Memorial Scholarship in Equine Science was created to honor the memory of a man who tirelessly served the public throughout his tenure as a New Jersey Assemblyman in the state legislature.

Assemblyman Dancer was a strong supporter of the New Jersey equine industry, agriculture in general, and of the Rutgers Equine Science Center. It is only fitting that this scholarship be awarded to a student who demonstrates leadership skills and community involvement following in Assemblyman Dancer's footsteps.

To apply for the scholarship, please go to: https://go.rutgers.edu/DancerScholarship

New Jersey Stakes Schedule for Summer 2024

Race Date	*Race Name*	*Age/Sex*	*Distance*	*Surface*
5/18/2024	**$85,000 Spruce Fir H**	F&M 3+	Six Furlongs	
5/19/2024	**$85,000 John J. Reilly H**	3+	Six Furlongs	
6/2/2024	**$85,000 Smart N Classy H**	F&M 3+	One Mile	Turf
6/9/2024	**$85,000 Friendly Lover H**	3+	One Mile	
7/6/2024	**$85,000 Jersey Girl H**	F&M 3+	One Mile	Turf
7/7/2024	**$85,000 Irish War Cry H**	3+	One Mile	Turf
8/25/2024	**$125,000 Charles Hesse III H**	3+	One Mile & One Sixteenth	
8/25/2024	**$100,000 New Jersey Breeders' H**	3+	Six Furlongs	
8/25/2024	**$100,000 Eleven North H**	F&M 3+	Six Furlongs	
9/14/2024	**$85,000 Pinot Grigio H**	F&M 3+	Five Furlongs	Turf
9/15/2024	**$85,000 Joey P. H**	3+	Five Furlongs	Turf

THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

Membership Application

Member Information

NAME _____ SS#/FEDERAL I.D.# _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ COUNTY _____

TELEPHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Membership Categories

☐ Breeder — A breeder member shall be a person who owns the required interest in a broodmare or registered stallion domiciled in New Jersey; who submits an application for membership, and pays the membership dues. A breeder member shall have voting rights.

☐ Owner — An owner member shall be a person who owns a registered New Jersey- bred; who submits an application for membership, and pays the membership dues. An owner member will not have voting rights.

☐ Associate — An associate member is a person who is interested in owning, breeding, or racing horses in the State of New Jersey or in fostering economic activity through the breeding, ownership and/or racing of horses in the State of New Jersey. An associate member will not have voting rights.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Membership Dues

A check or money order for $100.00 must accompany this form. Spouses are encouraged to join the **TBANJ** under joint membership status. This fee would total $150.00 per couple. Each spouse must fill out a separate form to accompany the payment. Membership will be effective upon receipt and will be in force each calendar year and must be renewed annually.

THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY
265 Hwy 36
Suite 1R
W. Long Branch, NJ 07764
(732) 542-8880
email: njbreds@gmail.com

North Carolina
THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

June 2024

President's message

Congratulations to Clint Lowry, Arlee Arkofa and Ken Orchard on their horses wins! Hats off to all those whose horses made it to the track. A special mention goes to the remarkable Flat Out Flying, bred by Beth Muirhead and Frank Coniglio. This 8-year-old war-horse gelding has 43 in-the-money races from 56 lifetime starts. That's a rate of 77 percent, with 34 percent of those wins!

I want to say how much I like my Grammarly app's new AI feature. Although it didn't improve all my paragraphs, what it rewrites is much better. You can tell the difference between what I write and what AI writes, I'm sure.

Thanks for your continued support.

–Rebecca

Race Reviews

Raise a Ruckus, a remarkable horse by Fiber Sonde out of Hot Creek Risin', by Bring the Heat, triumphed March 28 at Charles Town. This victory, a testament to the horse's prowess, was significant for owner and breeder Clint Lowry. On a fast track, the gray or roan 5-year-old gelding ran 4½ furlongs in :53.57. Raise a Ruckus took the lead at the half-mile pole, held off his rivals down the stretch, and clinched the win by 1 length.

Raise a Ruckus took second April 19 at Charles Town, running 6½ furlongs.

Greatandgood, by Great Notion out of So Stunning, by Jump Start, won at Charles Town March 30 for owner Arkofa Farm. The 4-year-old dark bay gelding ran an incredible race, going 7 furlongs in 1:28.76 on a fast track. Greatandgood stalked the pace three wide, took the lead at the half-mile pole, cleared the pack by 4 lengths down the stretch, and held off his closing foes to win by 1¾ lengths.

Jersey Perfection, by Mission Impazable out of P J Hooker, by Hook and Ladder, won April 14 at Tampa Bay Downs for breeder Ken Orchard – Jet 'M Stable. It was the first start of the year for the 5-year-old dark bay or brown gelding, and he ran 6 furlongs in 1.11:93 on a fast track. Trailing the field at the start and up the backstretch, the gelding made his closing move at the quarter pole, picked off his rivals down the stretch, and claimed victory by a length.

SV Photography

Jersey Perfection wins at Tampa Bay Downs for breeder Ken Orchard – Jet 'M Stable.

My Shea D Lady, a talented stakes-winning filly by Solomini out of Ladyberg, by Teuflesberg, ran second at Aqueduct in the $200,000 New York Stallion Stakes for owner Dan Shea - Shea D Boy's Stable April 14. The 3-year-old dark bay filly ran 6 furlongs on a fast track.

Flat Out Flying, by Flat Out out of She'sa Tough Tiger, by Tiger Ridge, finished third at Laurel Park April 5 for breeders Beth Muirhead and Frank Coniglio. This 8-year-old chestnut gelding ran 1 1/16 miles on a fast track.

Hitting the Board

March 25 – April 24, 2024

Date	Horse	Track	NCTA Connection	RESULTS
28-Mar	Raise a Ruckus	Charles Town	Bred & owned by Clint Lowry	WINNER!
30-Mar	Greatandgood	Charles Town	Owned by Arlee Arkofa	WINNER!
4-Apr	Flat Out Flying	Laurel Park	Bred by Beth Muirhead & Frank Coniglio	3rd
14-Apr	Jersey Perfection	Tampa Bay Downs	Bred by Ken Orchard - Jet M Stable	WINNER!
14-Apr	My Shea D Lady	Aqueduct $200K NY Stallion S	Owned by Dan Shea - Shea D Boy's Stable	2nd
19-Apr	Raise a Ruckus	Charles Town	Bred & owned by Clint Lowry	2nd

North Carolina Thoroughbred Association

2024 MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME_____SPOUSE_____

FARM_____

MAILING ADDRESS_____

CITY_____STATE_____ZIP_____

E-MAIL_____

PHONE: HOME_____ CELL_____WORK_____

☐Jr. MEMBER - AGE 25 UNDER @ -0 ☐FARM @ $80.00 ☐SPONSOR @ $140.00 ☐CORPORATE SPONSOR @ $250.00

☐INDIVIDUAL @ $55.00

☐NON-PROFIT HORSE ASSOCIATIONS @ $20.00(covers cost of magazines)

Membership includes subscriptions to Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred Magazine

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Involvement in Thoroughbred Industry
(Please check any or all pertaining to you)

☐Breeder ☐Racing ☐ Steeplechase ☐Boarding ☐Foaling
☐Lay-ups ☐Race Training ☐Racing Fan ☐Showing ☐Show Training
☐Hunter/Jumper ☐Eventing ☐Dressage ☐Pleasure ☐Other_____

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: **N.C.T.A.**
MAIL WITH COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: **Rebecca Montaldo, NCTA, P.O. Box 76., Fayetteville NC 28302**

Thank you for your support.

North Carolina Thoroughbred Association
(910) 261-7595 • www.ncthoroughbred.com • ncthoroughbred@gmail.com • P.O. Box 76, Fayetteville, NC 28302
Rebecca Montaldo,** president; **Jimmy Teal,** treasurer; Directors: **Arlee Arkofa, Caroline Cooper, Vince Mathews, Chris Stiller

PENNSYLVANIA HORSE BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

PA Thoroughbred NEWSLETTER

June 2024
pabred.com

PA-BRED REMINDERS

- **Early registration:** Within 365 days of foaling
- **Yearling registration:** Dec. 31 of yearling year
- **Stallion registration:** Feb. 15 of year breeding
- **Broodmare domicile:** Dec. 1 or 14 days after a public sale or entering state if being bred back to PA-sire

VISIT PABRED.COM

- **Racing and breeding news**
- **PA-Bred entries/results**
- **Rules, regulations, forms**

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2023 PHBA Champions

Horse of the Year

3-Year-Old Male

ANGEL OF EMPIRE

Bred by Forgotten Land Investment Inc. & Black Diamond Equine Corp.

A Grade 1 winner, classic-placed and a millionaire all in one year, Angel of Empire burst onto the scene Jan. 1 with a second-place finish in his stakes debut, Oaklawn Park's Smarty Jones. He followed with victories in Fair Grounds' Grade 2 Risen Star and the $1.25-million Arkansas Derby-G1. Sent off as favorite in the Kentucky Derby-G1, he rallied from more than a dozen lengths back to finish third. Next, he deadheated for fourth in the Belmont Stakes-G1, just a little over 2 lengths behind winner Arcangelo, and finished his season with a troubled third, beaten a half length, in Saratoga's Jim Dandy Stakes-G2. In six starts he earned $1,446,375, tops among all PA-Breds in 2023.

2-Year-Old Filly
CARMELINA
Bred by Lilith E. Boucher

Well-traveled Carmelina recorded four wins at four different tracks, with stakes wins in Colonial Downs' Keswick, Penn National's Shamrock Rose and Laurel Park's Gin Talking. In six starts, she earned $221,800.

2-Year-Old Male
DRUM ROLL PLEASE
Bred by Barlar LLC

Racing exclusively in New York, Drum Roll Please was on the board three times in four starts. His campaign wrapped with a third in the Remsen Stakes-G2 behind Dornoch and Sierra Leone. He recorded his first win in a maiden special weight at Belmont at The Big A meet in October after finishing second behind eventual Grade 1 winner Locked in his second start at Saratoga.

3-Year-Old Filly
NEECIE MARIE
Bred by Jon A. Marshall

The richest PA-Bred 3-year-old filly of 2023, Neecie Marie made nine starts, won four times and was second twice while amassing more than $265,000. Winner of the Mrs. Penny Stakes in her stakes debut on the PA Day At the Races card, she faced graded company the rest of the year. In New York, she just missed by a neck in the $350,000 Fasig-Tipton Jockey Club Oaks Invitational Stakes-G3 and was second again in the Sands Point-G2.

Older Female
Turf Female
Female Sprinter
CARAVEL
Bred by Elizabeth M. Merryman

Kicking off the year with three consecutive stakes scores, which extended her win streak to five, Caravel was the top turf sprinter in the nation after reeling off wins in the Grade 2 Shakertown against males at Keeneland in April and the Unbridled Sidney Stakes on the Kentucky Oaks undercard in May, and recording her second Grade 1 win while taking down males in the Jaipur Stakes on Belmont Stakes Day at Belmont Park, completing 6 furlongs in 1:07.93. She added $652,175 to her bankroll in six starts, the most for any female PA-Bred runner in 2023.

Older Male
NIMITZ CLASS
Bred by Arrowwood Farm

On the board in all nine starts in 2023, Nimitz Class ran a win streak to five in the early months of the year with victories in the John B. Campbell, Harrison E. Johnson Memorial and Native Dancer, all at Laurel Park, and an allowance score at Parx. He recorded his fifth win of the year in the Parx Dirt Mile while defeating multiple Grade 1 winner Gunite. In between were seconds in the Grade 3 Salvator Mile, Deputed Testamony and Storm Cat Stakes and he concluded his season with a third in the M.P. Ballezzi Appreciation Mile. He was the richest PA-Bred older male of the year with earnings of $482,600.

Male Sprinter
TWISTED RIDE
Bred by Kasey K Racing Stable

Nine times in 11 starts Twisted Ride came home in the top three, seven in stakes company, all at distances under a mile. From late January through late April he won four straight, including Parx Racing's Fishtown Stakes and Page McKenney Handicap in gritty fashion, and added a victory in the Banjo Picker Sprint on the PA Day At the Races card in August. He was twice graded stakes-placed in New York with a second in the Grade 3 Runhappy and a third in the Grade 3 Bold Ruler.

Turf Male
OUR SHOT
Bred by Dr. S. Mark Rayburg Inc.

In six straight races, from Tampa Bay to Saratoga, with stops at Keeneland and Monmouth Park thrown in, Our Shot won three times, with two seconds and a third. He was Grade 2-placed when second in Keeneland's Woodford Stakes at 5½ furlongs on the turf, and added turf stakes-placings in Monmouth's Get Serious and Saratoga's Harvey Pack.

PA Preferred Female
Leading Total Breeding Fund Recipient (Horse)
AOIFE'S MAGIC
Bred by Mohns Hill Farm LLC

Aoife's Magic's perfect 4-for-4 season, by an average winning margin of more than 5½ lengths, included stakes scores in Parx Racing's Imply and Miss Behaviour. The daughter of Pennsylvania legend Smarty Jones led all PA-Bred 2-year-olds by earnings with $261,600 (for an average of $65,400 per start).

PA Preferred Male
GORDIAN KNOT
Bred by Mr. & Mrs. Joe Imbesi

Three straight wins, two in stakes, and a third in the Grade 2 Gallant Bob Stakes at Parx were the highlights of Gordian Knot's sophomore campaign. Sired in PA by Social Inclusion, the bay gelding captured the Danzig Stakes at Penn National in June, a Parx allowance in July, and scored in the Salvatore M. DeBunda Sprint Stakes against open company in August in his five starts.

Broodmare of the Year
ZEEZEE ZOOMZOOM
Dam of Caravel and Witty
Owned by Elizabeth M. Merryman

Zeezee Zoomzoom's PA-Bred duo of Caravel and Witty added to their laurels in 2023 with five stakes wins between them and, combined, they earned over $800,000 of their career total $2.46 million. Caravel recorded three stakes wins, including her second career Grade 1 victory when defeating males in the Jaipur Stakes on Belmont Stakes day, and Witty won two stakes and placed in three others.

Lifetime Achievement Award
GLENN BROK

Award of Merit
RYERSS FARM FOR AGED EQUINES

Thoroughbred Makeover
Top PA-Bred
PHLOX
Bred by Dede McGehee

Leading Total Breeding Fund Recipient
UPTOWNCHARLYBROWN STUD LLC
$868,866

Leading Overall Breeder of Pennsylvania-breds
BLACKSTONE FARM LLC
$2,056,241

Leading Breeder Award Recipient
UPTOWNCHARLYBROWN STUD LLC
$632,476.66

Leading Stallion
UPTOWNCHARLYBROWN
$236,389.24

Smarty Jones connections honored at Iroquois Banquet

Brian Sanfratello presented Pat Chapman, owner/breeder of Smarty Jones, and John Servis, trainer of Smarty Jones, with gifts celebrating the 20-year anniversary of Smarty Jones' Triple Crown endeavors.

PHBA Iroquois Awards Dinner

Honoring PA-Bred
Champions of 2023

Held at the Inn at Mendenhall
Chadds Ford, PA
Friday, May 10

Guest speaker Tom Durkin

Christian and Christina Black accept honors for PA-bred Horse of the Year and Champion 3-year-old Male Angel of Empire

John Servis accepts for Neecie Marie

Krangels and Michael Day accept for Twisted Ride

Remy WInants accepts for Carmelina

Tom Coutler accepts for Nimitz Class

Ed Price accepts for Aoife's Magic

The Imbesies accept for Gordian Knot

Lizzie Merryman accepts for Caravel, Witty and Zeezee Zoomzoom

Glenn Brok accepts lifetime achievement award with wife Becky

Mark Rayburg accepts for Our Shot

SCTOBA

South Carolina

Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER JUNE 2024

Racing Across the Nation

Two graduates of South Carolina training centers and a Camden-based steeplechaser won stakes between March 30 and April 20.

Abaan, trained by SCTOBA member Kate Dalton and ridden by her husband Bernie, won the Carolina Cup March 30. This steeplechase stakes race was contested over Springdale Racecourse in Camden. Abaan is owned by Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Daigneault Thoroughbreds. Eclipse maintains an office in Aiken. After a career as a multiple stakes winner on the flat, Abaan has won three of his four career starts over jumps including two stakes, the other the Foxbrook Champion Hurdle Stakes last October. Abaan trailed the field for the first 1½ miles of this 2⅛-mile race. He moved up to challenge the leader at the final fence and proved best winning by 2¼ lengths.

Post Time posted his fourth stakes win in a row when capturing the Carter Stakes-G2 at Aqueduct April 6. Post Time was last for the first half mile of this 7-furlong stakes. He came four wide into the stretch and in a hard-fought duel, got up to win by a neck. In nine career starts, Post Time has won eight times, five stakes. He has earned $582,910. This colt was prepared for his racing career by Cary Frommer in Aiken.

Dataman became a stakes winner for the second time by winning the Henry S. Clark Stakes at Laurel Park April 20. Dataman, went through the breaking process at the Travis Durr Training Center. This 4-year-old gelding was fifth early on before launching his rally in the turn for home. He took the lead nearing the sixteenth-pole and crossed the finish line 1¼ lengths in front.

Carolina Cup takes place before large crowd

The Carolina Cup ran for the 89th time at Springdale Racecourse in Camden before close to 40,000 fans March 30. Five races were held over National Hurdles. The day ended with a training race over the flat.

The day began with a Maiden Claiming race over jumps won by the Arch Kingsley-trained Sherkali, owned by Pierre Manigault's Hurricana Farm. He finished 2 lengths in front. Both Kingsley and Manigault are SCTOBA members. Sherkali was ridden by Parker Hendriks.

The second race, a Maiden Hurdle event, was captured by the George Laird-trained and Clark Ohrstrom-owned Lightning Rod. He won by a length under Gerard Galligan. In a hard-fought stretch drive, Feeling Festive beat Snow Geese to the wire in another Maiden race by a half length. Arch Kingsley saddled his second winner of the day. Richard Colton is the owner and Parker Hendriks was in the saddle for his second win.

The fourth race was a Ratings Handicap, and Tease and Seize was much the best, crossing the finish line 19½ lengths in front. Tease and Seize is trained by SCTOBA member, Richard Valentine, and owned by Mrs. George Ohrstrom Jr.

The feature race of the day, The Carolina Cup, was captured by Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners' Abaan by 2¼ lengths. Abaan was a multiple stakes winner on the flat before moving to the jump circuit last August.

Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners formed a merger with Dogwood Stable in 2013 and continues to maintain an office in Aiken. Abaan has won three in a row over hurdles, including two stakes, after finishing second in his debut over jumps. He has been excellently prepared by SCTOBA member Kate Dalton and ridden in each of his starts by Kate's husband, Bernie.

The day concluded with a Flat Race. Bernie Dalton quickly got back in the saddle to guide St. Rita Racing's China Beach to victory. Ted Thompson is the trainer.

Done Talking sires flurry of winners

Done Talking, who stands at Goree Smith's Elloree Training Center, is the sire of six recent South Carolina-bred winners. Four of these wins occurred at Laurel Park. Stop the Cap was best in his race March 9, Voodoo Priestess the next day, Walk Away Joe on March 17 and Homecoming Joe on the same day.

Stop the Cap was bred by Greg Smith and trained by his uncle, Hamilton. Voodoo Priestess and Homecoming King are owned by Goree and trained by Hammy.

Goree Smith bred two daughters of Done Talking that have recorded multiple wins this year. On March 29, Tilted Tiara won her fourth race in a row. She proved best in a starter optional claiming race at Charles Town; her previous three starts were at Penn National.

Miss Fussy Pants won a starter allowance at Mahoning Valley April 10.

Done Talking *continued*

She previously won an allowance at the same track on Feb. 22.

Done Talking, a son of Broken Vow out of graded stakes winner Dixie Talking, won the Illinois Derby-G3 for trainer Ham Smith in 2012.

Frommer sells three at OBS Spring

Congratulations to Cary Frommer, who consigned three colts to the OBS Spring Two-Year-Olds in Training Sale in April. She sold two sons of Liam's Map, one out of Ebony Moment who brought $190,000 and the other out of Ch Ch Cherry Bomb who was knocked down for $115,000. Frommer also sold a Vekoma out of Dad'ssilverpitcher for $130,000.

South Carolina-trained winners

Horse	*Training Center*	*Date*	*Track*	*Type of Race*
Freedom Road	Kirkwood Stables	03/20/24	Tampa Bay	Allowance
Coast to Glory	Kirkwood Stables	03/22/24	Fonner Park	Maiden Special Weight
Chef d'Etat	Arch Kingsley	03/23/24	Aiken	Maiden Special Weight
Tease and Seize	Richard Valentine	03/23/24	Aiken	Handicap Hurdle
Pioneer Parade	Elloree Tng Ctr	03/24/24	Oaklawn Park	Allowance
Carcharoth	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	03/25/34	Parx Racing	Maiden Special Weight
Raise a Ruckus	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	03/28/24	Charles Town	Maiden Special Weight
Faire Plaiser	Aiken - Legacy Stable	03/29/24	Tampa Bay	Maiden Special Weight
Tilted Tiara	Elloree Tng Ctr	03/29/24	Charles Town	Allowance
Donegal Surges	Elloree Tng Ctr	03/29/24	Aqueduct	Allowance
Grandpa's Kid	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	03/29/24	Aqueduct	Starter Allowance
Feeling Festive	Arch Kingsley	03/30/24	Camden	Maiden Special Weight
Malloy	Elloree Tng Ctr	03/30/24	Hawthorne	Allowance
ABAAN	Kate Dalton	03/30/24	Camden	The Carolina Cup
Dontpasstheprinces	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	04/01/24	Parx Racing	Maiden Special Weight
POST TIME	Aiken - Cary Frommer	04/06/24	Aqueduct	Carter S-G2
Little Luca	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	04/06/24	Aqueduct	Allowance
Bet the Line	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	04/06/24	Laurel Park	Maiden Special Weight
A Primera Vista	Mason Springs	04/07/24	Tampa Bay	Allowance
Olympic Romp	Elloree Tng Ctr	04/08/24	Parx Racing	Allowance
Warrior Tod	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	04/09/24	Parx Racing	Maiden Special Weight
Miss Fussy Pants	Elloree Tng Ctr	04/10/24	Mahoning Valley	Starter Allowance
The Band Runs On	Aiken - Cary Frommer	04/12/24	Laurel Park	Maiden Special Weight
Jay Jay Dee	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	04/12/24	Charles Town	Allowance
Silken Dollar	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	04/12/24	Aqueduct	Allowance
Ready for Shirl	Elloree Tng Ctr	04/13/24	Keeneland	Maiden Special Weight
Nonesuch Girl	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	04/13/24	Charles Town	Maiden Special Weight
Rominski	Mason Springs	04/14/24	Laurel Park	Allowance
Tina Ballerina	Rentz Farm Tng Ctr	04/14/24	Gulfstream Park	Maiden Special Weight
Low Country Magic	Mason Springs	04/17/24	Keeneland	Maiden Special Weight
DATAMAN	Travis Durr Tng Ctr	04/20/24	Laurel Park	Henry S. Clark S

VIRGINIA

COLONIAL DOWNS ANNOUNCES STAKES SCHEDULE FOR 2024 MEET; FESTIVAL OF RACING SLATED FOR AUGUST 10; VIRGINIA DERBY SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 7

Topped by a quartet of graded races, Colonial Downs unveiled its 2024 stakes program consisting of 27 races worth $5.7 million for the 27-day season which runs from Thursday, July 11 through Saturday, September 7.

The Colonial Downs Festival of Racing, slated for Saturday, August 10 is highlighted by the Grade 1 Arlington Million, the Grade 2 $500,000 Beverly D. and the Grade 2 $500,000 Secretariat Stakes, the traditional weekend for the renowned trio. The Million will be run at 1¼ miles, the Beverly D. will be contested at 1-3/16 miles and the Secretariat covers one mile. All three races are slated to be run over Colonial's acclaimed Secretariat Turf Course.

Once again, the Beverly D. has been selected as a Breeders' Cup Challenge Win and You're In race for the Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf to be held at Del Mar in California on Saturday, November 2. Festival Day is being expanded for 2024 to include 4 additional stakes races: the $100,000 Petramalo Mile, a one-mile dirt race for 3-year-olds and its sister race, the $100,000 Penny Chenery at seven furlongs; the $150,000 Van Clief for 3-year-olds & up at 5½ furlongs on the turf and its distaff companion event, the $150,000 Andy Guest.

The Grade 3 $500,000 New Kent County Virginia Derby, Colonial's longtime signature event, will be raced on closing day, Saturday, September 7. The 1-1/8 miles grass race headlines a card with $1.3 million in stakes purses including five other turf stakes: the $250,000 Virginia Oaks for 3-year-old fillies at 1-1/16 miles; the $150,000 Da Hoss Stakes for older horses at 5½ furlongs; the $150,000 Colonial Cup a 1½-mile marathon for 3-year-olds & up; the $125,000 Rosie's Stakes for 2-year-olds sprinting 5 ½ furlongs; and the $125,000 Kitten's Joy Stakes for 2-year-olds over a two-turn 1-1/16 miles on turf.

Last year's major stakes races at Colonial netted several notable winners: Da Hoss victor Nobals went on to capture the Grade 1 Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint at Santa Anita; Fev Rover, who took the Beverly D., added the Grade 1 E. P. Taylor Stakes at Woodbine to her already impressive resume; and Virginia Derby hero Integration later scored in the Grade 2 Hill Prince at Aqueduct. More recently, 2023 Virginia Derby runner up Program Trading captured the Grade 1 Old Forester Bourbon Turf Classic at Churchill Downs on the Kentucky Derby undercard.

Opening weekend action includes three new turf stakes: the $125,000 Million Prep at 1-1/8 miles; $125,000 Beverly D. Prep over 1-1/16 miles; and the $125,000 Boston at one mile, which will serve as a prep for the Secretariat.

The following Saturday, July 20, a quartet of turf races for Virginia-bred or -sired older runners are on the docket: the $125,000 Brookmeade for fillies and mares at 1-1/16 miles, the $125,000 Edward P. Evans at one mile, and the $125,000 Punch Line and $125,000 Tyson Gilpin/Glenn Petty both at 5½ furlongs with the latter of the pair restricted to fillies and mares.

A pair of 2-year-old races for Virginia-restricted runners – the $150,000 Hickory Tree and its sister race the $150,000 Keswick – headline the Saturday, August 3 program. Both races have been lengthened to 5½ furlongs on the dirt.

Commonwealth Champions Day is scheduled for Saturday, August 31 and is highlighted by a quintet of turf races saluting Virgina runners: the $125,000 Jamestown is for Virginia-bred or -sired 2-year-olds going 5½ furlongs while the remaining four events are for Virginia-restricted horses – the $150,000 Meadow Stable for older horses at 5½ furlongs and its female companion race the $150,000 Camptown; and the $150,000 Bert Allen and its filly and mare counterpart, the $150,000 Nellie Fox, both at 1-1/16 miles.

Additionally, there will be two $100,000 stakes races for fillies and mares presented by the National Steeplechase Association, the Randolph D. Rouse on Thursday, August 8 and the Life's Illusion on Thursday, September 5. Condition books and stall applications are available online at www.colonialdowns.com under the horsemen's tab. Stall applications are due Tuesday, May 21.

NEW STUDY: VIRGINIA EQUINE INDUSTRY PROGRAM HAS GENERATED $86.2 MILLION IN ECONOMIC IMPACT

Benefits of Virginia-Certified Residency Program to be on Display at Upcoming Colonial Downs Summer Meet

A newly released study commissioned by the Virginia Equine Alliance demonstrates the significant impact of the Virginia-Certified Residency Program for thoroughbreds on Virginia's economy.

According to the study, the program has generated an estimated economic impact of $86.2 million between 2017 – 2023.

The program requires out-of-state thoroughbred horses to reside at least six consecutive months (prior to turning three years old) at a Virginia farm to receive a certification as a Virginia-certified thoroughbred horse. Upon completion of their residency, those horses then qualify to receive bonuses in eligible races.

"This is a significant total, especially taking i nto consideration that the program is still relatively new," said Debbie Easter, President of the Virginia Equine Alliance. "The program didn't begin until 2017, yet already is demonstrating its value."

Hundreds of Virginia horse farms participate in the program, receiving income from horse owners and breeders from outside of the state.

More than 5,000 horses have participated in the Virginia-Certified Residency program since its inception.

The large pool of Certified horses to draw from is now evident in the 2024 Colonial Downs Condition Book. Six Virginia-Restricted stakes with combined purse money of $750,000 will be offered during the summer meet in New Kent which begins July 11. The Hickory Tree and Keswick Stakes — two-year-old dirt sprints — will be held August 3 while a four-pack of Handicap events for older horses will be contested on Commonwealth Stakes Day, August 31. The Meadow Stable, Camptown, Bert Allen and Nellie Mae Cox each have a purse of $150,000.

A total of 40 Virginia-restricted overnight races will also be offered in the first Condition Book which covers the first 16 days of a 27-day meet. Fourteen maiden special weight races, with a purse of $75,000 each, are listed along with a variety of others including six allowance races.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NEW STUDY INCLUDE: FROM 2017-2023:

- The direct spending of the program was estimated at $54.5 million for the seven years from 2017 to 2023. These spending activities generated ripple (indirect plus induced) effects yielding a total economic impact of $86.2 million.
- The program generated an estimated $1.8 million in tax revenue for the state government.
- The cumulative economic impact is 5.9 times larger than the total incentive payout, representing a strong return on investment in the program.

The Virginia-Certified Residency Program for thoroughbreds is just one component of Virginia's thriving horse breeding and racing industry.

To read the full report, please visit virginiahorseracing.com. For more information on the Virginia Certified program and bonus incentives visit www.vabred.org.

The study was commissioned by the Virginia Equine Alliance, the industry's organizational body that promotes the horse racing and breeding industry throughout the state. Chmura Economics and Analytics (Chmura), a research consulting firm in Richmond, Virginia, conducted the study.

SCENES FROM THE VIRGINIA THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION AWARDS NIGHT

The Virginia Thoroughbred Association held its annual Awards Night May 3 at Great Meadow, site of the Virginia Gold Cup steeplechase races the following day. A complete report on award winners and event pictures can be accessed at vabred.org but here are several pictures from the evening:

Great Meadow provides a picturesque setting for both the awards festivities and steeplechase races.

Over 130 people attended the awards night festivities in a large trackside tent overlooking the stretch run at Great Meadow.

Phil Schoenthal, pictured with his wife Sarah, trains Virginia-Bred Colt Turf Sprint Champion Determined Kingdom.

Ann Mudge Backer (picured) & Smitten Farm were named Co-Breeder of the Year along with Audley Farm. Backer bred Virginia-bred Horse of the Year Gigante.

Owner/breeder Sam English III, whose Chambeau was recognized as 2023 Virginia-Bred Filly Turf Sprinter Champion.

Virginia Thoroughbred Association

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Visit www.vabred.org–the best source for Virginia breeding and racing news
For more information on the Virginia Breeders Fund or Virginia Stakes Program, please contact the VTA.
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Virginia Breeders Fund

West Virginia
THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION
Newsletter June 2024

Upsets and controversy frame early WV stakes picture

By Jeff Gilleas

ORIGINAL GOLD STAKES

Legacy and longevity are certainly two words which describe the racing/breeding career of 24-year-old Original Gold, and the bountiful heritage she continues to impart to her connections. The stakes race named in honor of the two-time Cavada victor, run April 13, amassed an outstanding array of West Virginia-bred talent vying for the $75,000 prize.

The public's perception of the full ffield may have been somewhat myopic, as Maggie's Girl, occupying stall six in the iron monster, was installed as a prohibitive 3-5 favorite. The ultra-attractive daughter of Uncle Lino out of Maginot Line rarely experiences defeat, but on this night didn't possess the same vitality revealed in her bang-up 2024 debut two weeks earlier.

Breaking smartly, but mindful of the acute pace threats to his inside, veteran journeyman Larry Reynolds throttled back her natural speed, allowing stablemate Moonlit Song (post one) and Lightnin Runner (post five) to contend for control, as they shadowed each other into the clubhouse turn. Tote board numbers remained unaltered, as the dueling front runners moved in tandem towards the Inn at Charles Town, or as shrewd handicappers reference, Carlos's corner. It is at the quarter pole that jockey Carlos Lopez often employs a strategic slingshot tactic that propels his mounts into the mid-race lead, while others are catching a momentary respite.

Like her name implies, Lightnin Runner seized that advantage in a flash and willingly maintained a 2-length margin to the finish line. Trained by Ronney Brown, for owner George Nyren, the slight daughter of Battalion Runner out of My Lightnin Strike is bred by Ronney and Nicole Brown.

Winner of the 2022 Rachel's Turn, 2023 Its Binn Too Long and now the Original Gold Stakes, the 4-year-old has steadily matured under Brown's watchful eye. Both trainer and jockey agree. "Mentally this filly is constructively trending upward, and there may be room for continued improvement."

Thoroughbreds are a breed known for intelligence, aloofness and athleticism. From a sparkling debut effort in 2000, to back-to-back wins in the West Virginia Breeders Classic Cavada Stakes (2004-2005), to blue-blooded relatives like Golden Key, Original Gold is typical of horses bred by Francis Daniel III.

CONFUCIUS SAY STAKES

After impressive wins last year in the Russell Road and Sam Huff Breeders Classic, trainer Jeff Runco hit the road with Coastal Mission, testing elite company in the Cigar Mile (Grade 2), Stymie and Frank Y. Whiteley Stakes (winner by the flare of a nostril), leaving barn understudies Muad'dib ($943,000) and Social Chic ($404,000) as harmonious stable options for the Confucius Say. Another runner worthy of great interest was Cyndy McKee's No Change ($490,000), a durable son of Fiber Sonde with a preferred style of tucking in behind combative leaders and ambushing weary rivals late.

When the red clay settled, and the seventh race at Charles Town was declared official, it was none of the aforementioned noble steeds, but a fiery gelding named Espresso (25-1), bearing his father's likeness (Juba) and providing great joy and great controversy. Much of the responsibility that generated havoc for handicappers and horses was attributed to a dawdling pace.

Opening quarter and half-mile times equated to a group of $5,000 claimers, as off-the-pace runners strained to extricate themselves from crawling rush hour traffic. In a race full of high status grays, Espresso became the comet in the evening sky for owner-breeder Gary Hemp and trainer Keith Brown. Old school horse people who use hard work and dedication to affirm their love of horses, and not money. Excuses in horse racing are downright ordinary, however the objection lodged by Social Chic's jockey Angel Cruz, who finished second, narrowly avoiding a collision was reasonable.

Cruz's assertion was that if Espresso hadn't lugged in, and allowed him to continue unabated to the finish line, he was on the best horse.

Bizarrely, jockey Marshall Mendez was unseated by Espresso in his career debut and this time out met the same alarming fate on No Change, as he was crowded going into the far turn. Luck is the mother's milk of horse racing, at any track, and this troublesome race will not be a faded memory anytime soon, nor the laudable talent it was named for.

Like a portrait of the perfect racehorse, Confucius Say physically appeared to be from another planet. Born and raised at O'Sullivan Farms, the son of Eastover Court out of Mo Chun (by Feel the Power) possessed the key elements of uncommon musculature, iron will and good temperament. Having fashioned one of the best West Virginia-bred campaigns ever, Confucius bankrolled over $1 million, while adding three West Virginia Breeders Classic triumphs to the Funkhouser family trophy case.

ITS BINN TOO LONG STAKES

It only seems a minute ago that the general public strained to catch a glimpse of a pocket-sized chestnut filly named Its Binn too Long. Bred by James W. Casey, Its Binn too Long made her debut May 16, 1999, and successfully ran to a series of bullish morning workouts. The daughter of My Boy Adam out of Soy Binn won her first seven starts, which included the Ruth Funkhouser, Sadie Hawkins and West Virginia Cavada Breeders Classic Stakes.

The current ensemble of the 3-year-old filly crop met April 27, minus the cultural icon Direct the Cat, as several entrants sought to make some noise in the division before the champion's arrival. The one-turn distance of the Its Binn too Long demands agility and swiftness, and the individual that seized the profitable opportunity was Overnight Pow Wow. Hailing from the same barn as Direct the Cat, the daughter of Fiber Sonde out of Holy Pow Wow seemed a different horse in her stakes debut, as she was physically and mentality engaged from the outset.

The full sister to Late Night Pow Wow ($700,400), and Muad'dib ($943,362) pressed the pace from her outside post, under an aggressive ride by jockey Reshawn Latchman, and kicked away in the stretch for owner Beau Ridge Farm and trainer, Cyndy McKee. Breeder John McKee would be proud of the effort exhibited by Overnight Pow Wow, as `Big John' was a man that knew the importance of speed and the power of pace.

West Virginia Thoroughbred Breeders Association

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- The West Virginia Breeders Classics pays out almost $1 million in purses for WV-bred and/or -sired horses. It is held annually on the second Saturday in October.
- $800,000 in purses are allocated for up to 16 WV accredited stakes races during the year.
- Supplemental Purse Awards of up to 10% of the winner's share of the purse to the owner, breeder, and/or sire owner of the accredited WV-bred and/or -sired winner.
- West Virginia offers year-round racing with approximately 300 race days per year.

Chasing
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New irrigation system giving a flush of growth to Springdale

By Betsy Burke Parker

As lovely as she's been to central South Carolina – what with three-and-a-half seasons of soft, southern weather along with the giving and forgiving native sandy loam upon which thoroughbred horses have thrived for centuries, Mother Nature is at times an uncooperative partner.

Too much rain, not enough rain, rain at the wrong time, all the rain all at once, achingly long stretches of drought with no rain at all -- these are the issues that used to keep Carolina Cup Racing Association executive director Toby Edwards obsessively checking the weather app on his phone.

All the time.

Moisture matters, Edwards explains, with turf growth key to producing a safe, level racing surface at the Springdale Racecourse for their spring Carolina Cup meet and their newly-returning this November Colonial Cup meet.

A newly installed irrigation system promises – and delivers – exactly the right amount of moisture at exactly the right time in just the right places. Edwards tells it what to do and when.

"We used to have to count on rain from the sky," Edwards said. Now they've traded for "rain" from the ground. "This new irrigation system takes it to a whole new level."

Imagine a small black knob emerging from the turf -- Edwards punches in a special code. A misty but strong spray of water shoots out of the sprinkler head, watering hundreds of square feet as it rotates. The Rainmaker controls all of it, from the timing to the amount measured in gallons per minute.

Carolina Cup Racing Association executive director Toby Edwards ©Tod Marks

With that kind of power, in ancient times Edwards probably would have been elected tribe chief.

The timing was exquisite – last year, CCRA made a proposal to the South Carolina state legislature, "to invest in Springdale," requesting a grant to fund the irrigation system that would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. "We want to offer truly championship racing, and for that, you have to offer a truly championship course," Edwards said. "The only way to do that is to irrigate.

"Overseeding, weed control and fertilizers, they're all water-activated," translation: there has to be rain immediately following application, Edwards said. "We played a guessing game all the time, pretending we were weather forecasters.

"You were spending time, money and effort wishing and hoping the weatherman was right.

"With irrigation, you're in complete control of the amount of moisture

Springdale history

Camden's Springdale Racecourse, built in 1928, is one of South Carolina's winter colonies built up by visiting sportsmen and women from New York and other northern states as railroad travel made escaping harsh northern winters a no-brainer.

The first race meet was held at the facility in 1930. Harry Kirkover and Ernest Woodward designed the original Carolina Cup course – originally over timber.

The headliner swapped to stuffed brush obstacles in 1968.

CCRA is a 501(c)4 non-profit formed in 1963. Proceeds from the race meets are directed to the Health Services District of Kershaw County that benefits uninsured, underinsured and underserved locals through education, food banks, a free clinic and more. The association has given millions back to the community since the link was created by former Springdale owner Marion duPont Scott.

CCRA manages the Springdale Racecourse property as a training center, with two training tracks, a steeplechase schooling area and about 150 stalls as well as hosting two jump meets.

The National Steeplechase Museum was founded in 1998 under the direction of the Carolina Cup Racing Association. The museum started as the Carolina Cup Racing Museum, but when horsemen and others started donating items for the museum's collections, they donated things from all race meets, not just the Carolina Cup. After about a year the museum became the National Steeplechase Museum.

Scott acquired the Springdale property and adjacent acreage in 1953 from Mrs. Ambrose Clark of Aiken. Scott, already known as "the First Lady of American Steeplechasing," won the 1938 English Grand National with Battleship. Her Montpelier racing stable won more than 50 stakes, over fences and on the flat, and more than $5 million in purses.

Upon her death in 1983, Scott gifted Springdale to South Carolina.

delivered to your course. I can even tell it which heads to run in what order and how much water put out.

"It has been a learning curve, but this system has been fully operational since October. It guarantees we'll get good summer growth, which ensures good turf for the (returning, Colonial Cup) fall meet, and it helped the perennial rye back in winter, so we've got great turf for race day" at the March 30 Carolina Cup.

Custom-designed for Springdale by Smith Turf and Irrigation – they also designed irrigation for Churchill Downs' turf course, Camden's irrigation system covers 2 ¼ miles with 130 in-ground, pop-up sprinkler heads. The longer outer course isn't yet irrigated, but Edwards says the system allows for expansion when more state funds become available.

"Jeff (Teter, former champion jump rider and longtime Springdale course manager) reports that the course has an excellent stand of rye," overseeded then well-watered since October by the new system, echoed former CCRA director, and four-time champion jock John Cushman. "Camden's sandy soil drains unbelievable, and adding this irrigation to the course really makes it sure they'll get good grass, every meet, every year."

Edwards notes that Springdale's summer cover, Bermuda grass, is already starting to green up, too.

"The course looks great."

Cushman was Springdale director 1990 to 2000; he returned in 2018 to help Edwards transition into his position.

"The best thing about Camden is the footing," sandy loam, Cushman explained. "It never really gets hard, there's no clay.

"But the issue anywhere in the Carolinas is how good is your summer grass. Rye looks good in the winter, but your turf is built in the summer.

"If we get no rain at just the wrong time, it affects everything.

"The irrigation system takes the guess-work out of it."

NSA president Al Griffin says the improvements are timely. "Toby Edwards and the Carolina Cup folks have really upped the game at Springdale," Griffin said. "The focus on turf quality is much appreciated by the horsemen. (Bringing back) the Colonial Cup this fall creates two opportunities to run on the irrigated course," a win-win situation for the facility and the sport.

Summer Jumps Racing

Belmont at Saratoga
Sunday, June 9
$150,000 Beverly R. Steinman (Gr.1)

Colonial Downs
Thursday, July, 11
$50,000 Maiden Hurdle
$50,000 Maiden Filly/Mare Hurdle
$55,000 Allowance (NW2) Hurdle

Saratoga
Wednesday, July 17
$150,000 A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr.1) Hurdle Stakes

Colonial Downs
Thursday, July 18
$50,000 Maiden Hurdle
$30,000 Ratings Handicap Hurdle
$35,000 Ratings Handicap Hurdle

Saratoga
Wednesday, July 31
$75,000 Jonathan Kiser Memorial (Novice) Hurdle Stakes

Colonial Downs
Thursday, August 1
$50,000 Maiden Hurdle
$30,000 Maiden Starter Hurdle
$55,000 Allowance (NW2) Hurdle

Colonial Downs
Thursday, August 8
$50,000 Maiden Hurdle
$35,000 Ratings Handicap Hurdle
$100,000 Randolph Rouse (Filly/Mare) Hurdle Stakes

Saratoga
Wednesday, August 14
$150,000 Jonathan Sheppard Memorial (Gr.1) Hurdle Stakes

Colonial Downs
Thursday, August 22
$50,000 Maiden Hurdle
$50,000 Maiden (4YO) Hurdle
$30,000 Maiden Starter Hurdle

Saratoga
Wednesday, August 28
$75,000 Michael G. Walsh Memorial (Novice) Hurdle Stakes

Colonial Downs
Thursday, September 5
$50,000 Maiden Hurdle
$30,000 Ratings Handicap Hurdle
$100,000 Life's Illusion (Filly/Mare) Hurdle Stakes

Colonial Downs
Friday, September 6
$50,000 Flat Race for Jumpers

Belmont at Aqueduct
Thursday, September 19
$75,000 William Entenmann Memorial (Novice) Hurdle Stakes
$150,000 Lonesome Glory (Gr.1) Hurdle Stakes

— Classifieds —

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— Looking Back —

10 years ago

■ Making his first start outside of California, George Papaprodromou-trained Imperative, ridden by Kent Desormeaux, went off at 26-1 in the $1.5 million Charles Town Classic-G2 and beat another California shipper, defending champion Game On Dude, by 1½ lengths.

Imperative would race in the Charles Town Classic five times, finishing second the next year and winning again in 2018. He and Game On Dude, the latter a finalist on the 2024 National Hall of Fame ballot, earned a combined $9.8 million lifetime.

■ Two of the region's greatest runners – Pennsylvania-bred steeplechase legend Flatterer and Maryland-bred sprinter extraordinaire Safely Kept, both in the National Racing Hall of Fame – died within two days in April. Flatterer, at 35, had been the oldest Hall of Famer and Eclipse Award winner. Owned by Bill Pape, Jonathan Sheppard and George Harris and trained by Sheppard, Flatterer won four Eclipse Awards (1984-86) and 24 of his 52 career starts, 13 of them stakes.

Safely Kept, bred by JoAnn and David Hayden, won the Eclipse Award in 1989 as champion sprinter (male or female), was named Maryland-bred Horse of the Year twice and a state-bred champion each of her four seasons on the track. She captured 24 of 31 starts, 22 stakes, and earned $2,194,206, with her greatest victory the epic 1990 Breeders' Cup Sprint-G1. The daughter of Maryland sire Horatius was 28.

■ Stewart Strawbridge's Guts For Garters (Ire) topped the 15-horse field in the 118th Maryland Hunt Cup, edging Imperial Way by a nose. After being well beaten in the Benjamin H. Murray Memorial allowance on the Grand National card a week earlier, trainer Sanna Neilson was concerned the gelding wouldn't be able to handle the longer, more arduous Hunt Cup.

"I really thought about not running, and kept asking myself what was wrong," said Neilson. "But [jockey Jody Petty] kept saying not to worry about it, that the horse had a bad day. . ."

■ It may have been a racing first – the cancellation of the remainder of Parx's card after one race on a bright and sunny afternoon due to a family of foxes living in a drainpipe near the turf course. A spokesperson for the racing office said it was feared the foxes would run onto the track during a race and potentially cause injury to horses and riders. The family was successfully relocated and racing resumed the next day.

25 years ago

■ Lucy Acton profiled Virginia breeder Bill Backer and his Smitten Farm. The famed advertising executive (the idea man behind such iconic slogans as "I'd like to buy the world a Coke," "It's Miller time" and "Soup is good food") had built up a solid broodmare band, many homebreds, on his 700-acre Middleburg farm. Among his stars were Applause, winner of seven stakes and $362,437 and a stakes producer; Snit, his first homebred Grade 2 stakes winner; and multiple stakes winner Crab Grass.

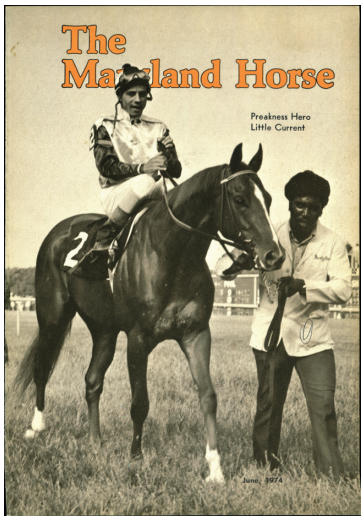
■ Ann and Henry Stern's Saluter won the Virginia Gold Cup for the sixth consecutive time. The "Timber Horse of the Decade" kept the decision in doubt while dropping out of contention for most of the 4 miles and 23 fences. Trainer/jockey Jack Fisher revved up the 10-year-old Virginia-bred by the final turn and the son of Maryland sire Salutely charged to the front in time to win by 4 lengths in 8:23.80, shattering his 1995 course record by more than three seconds.

■ Maryland legend Cigar was moved to the Hall of Champions at the Kentucky Horse Park. The all-time leading Thoroughbred earner ($9,999,815) retired to stud after his 1996 season. Despite the best efforts of his veterinary team, Cigar was unable to impregnate a mare and was loaned to the Horse Park indefinitely, where he would participate three times daily in the Hall of Champions show.

■ After four attempts in the Maryland Hunt Cup (including two seconds), 11-year-old Welter Weight came out triumphant in the 103rd running. Winning was sweet for Armata Stable (the partnership of friends Perry Bolton and Ben Griswold IV). "It's such a feat just to get in the race, much less to win it," said Bolton. "This is the greatest single sporting event there is – because of the tradition – and I never thought I'd be on that [winner's] wagon."

■ Jockey Julie Krone, whose career was launched in the Mid-Atlantic in the early 1980s, made her final regional appearance on Maryland Spring Challenge Day at Pimlico, one day before hanging up her tack at Lone Star Park. "Physically, I'm just not up to it," said the 35-year-old, who for some 19 years ranked among the outstanding athletes, male or female, in the country. "I don't want to risk another serious injury and, at this point, there's nothing left for me to prove."

In 2000, Krone was the first woman inducted into the Racing Hall of Fame and went into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 2013. She returned in 2002, became the first woman to win a Breeders' Cup race (2003 Juvenile Fillies aboard Halfbridled) and retired for good in 2004.



50 years ago

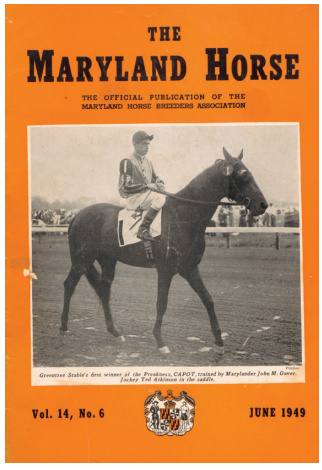
■ Darby Dan Farm homebred Little Current – by Native Dancer's grandson, the great European champion *Sea-Bird – powered to a 7-length victory in the 99th Preakness, giving owner John Galbreath a win in the only 3-year-old classic to elude him. The late-running chestnut colt lost all chance in the Kentucky Derby due to traffic problems when last early in the 23-horse field, but rebounded at Pimlico with a trip "aided by the nerve of [his rider] Miguel Rivera, who guided his willing mount through the eye of a needle in early stretch."

Pimlico management declared well in advance of the race that if more than 14 horses were entered, the Preakness would be split. Editor Snowden Carter believed that decision as "logical, reasonable and just." He added: "The deal they pulled in Kentucky stating that the racing secretary would eliminate the weakest if the number of entrants exceeded 24 was unfair, crummy and without precedent."

■ From the standpoint of pedigrees, the Preakness was dominated by three past Preakness winners – Bold Ruler, Polynesian and the latter's son, Native Dancer. Six of the 13 starters were grandsons of Bold Ruler. But Polynesian carried the day as three of the top four finishers were his male-line descendants. Native Dancer appeared behind Little Current and fourth-place finisher Jolly Johu (by son Restless Native). Finishing second was Neapolitan Way, a son of Barbizon (by Polynesian). Bold Ruler's grandson, Kentucky Derby winner Cannonade (by Bold Bidder), was third.

■ Stuart Janney Jr.'s Ruffian won her debut by 15 lengths and equaled the track record at Belmont Park. Bred in Kentucky by Marylander Janney, the daughter of Reviewer was out of Maryland-bred Shenanigans, by Native Dancer, and a half-sister to Icecapade. The second choice in the betting, Ruffian drew away from her opposition in the 5½-furlong race, coasting home in 1:03.

■ The MHBA's 40th annual Yearling Show bordered on the edge of disaster when heavy rain coupled with a 50 mph wind swept the show ring in the centerfield of the Timonium racetrack. The previous year's Triple Crown-winning trainer Lucien Laurin somehow managed to judge all four classes in the unrelenting rain, but found judging for the grand championship utterly impossible and retreated to the Timonium sales pavilion where the job was completed. He selected as grand champion a Quadrangle—Ameriturn (by *Turn-to) colt bred and shown by Dr. and Mrs. William Wright's Labadie Mill Farm of Middletown, Del.



75 years ago

■ In a thrilling renewal of the Preakness, Greentree Stable's Capot – trained by Marylander John Gaver and ridden by Ted Atkinson – prevailed by a short head over Palestinian to provide breeder/owner Greentree Stable its first win in the classic. Calumet Farm's brilliant filly Wistful was also a star during the meet as she beat 11 others in the Pimlico Oaks. The half-sister to Coaltown came in with a win in the Kentucky Oaks and added the Coaching Club American Oaks, all in May.

Those were a few of the bright spots of Pimlico's eight-day meet that suffered from direct competition from Garden State, resulting in poor handle and attendance figures. Don Reed noted that horsemen who wanted to race on the New Jersey circuit during the summer went to Garden State at the close of Havre de Grace and remained there, passing up Pimlico because of the short meeting. All of which revived talk that Pimlico should be permitted to transfer its activities to Laurel.

Added Reed: ". . . it seems to be a foregone conclusion that an effort will be made next winter to have the transfer to Laurel approved by the Legislature. Just what preliminary moves will be necessary remains to be seen."

■ Following the death of Virginian Dr. Lewis Allen, whose Clifton Farm horses won timber and flat races, horse shows and hunter trials, came word that Louis McL. Merryman and Sons were set to disperse Allen's 20-some horses at the farm just miles from Berryville, Va., and Charles Town, W.Va. "Young Louis Merryman, whose work in the stand is drawing increasing favorable attention everywhere, will wield the gavel."

■ "Blessed with the loveliest weather we have ever seen for our 15th annual yearling show, judge Abram Hewitt did a thorough, painstaking job of selecting those "most likely to succeed," wrote Humphrey Finney in his Editor's Saddle-Bag. "The judge dictated complete reasons to his ring secretary on all his placings, and comments on all entries." Larry MacPhail's B. Battery, a chestnut colt by Discovery—Boomtown Gal, by Stimulus, was named champion. The colt, named for MacPhail's outfit in World War I, was the first Thoroughbred named by the former New York Yankees executive and the first shown by the new local breeder.

Old Hilltop

In 1938, construction at Baltimore's Pimlico Race Course involved removing the infield hill – source of the track's still-used nickname Old Hilltop – to improve sightlines for spectators in the clubhouse and grandstand and to assist the operators of movie and television cameras. Since the track's opening in 1870, the hill was a gathering spot for horsemen and fans to watch races. Now, the country's second oldest racetrack faces a complete reconstruction, the first phase beginning this year, to create a new home for Maryland racing.

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